

STATE LIBRARY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
main,stk 362.509748B836t  
Township and borough system of



0 0001 00387793 1

S  
362.509748  
B836t

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

---

# THE TOWNSHIP AND BOROUGH SYSTEM OF POOR RELIEF IN PENNSYLVANIA

DAVID KENNETH BRUNER

A DISSERTATION

IN SOCIOLOGY

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IN

PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR

THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PHILADELPHIA

1937



# THE TOWNSHIP AND BOROUGH SYSTEM OF POOR RELIEF IN PENNSYLVANIA

---

A DISSERTATION

IN SOCIOLOGY

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DAVID KENNETH BRUNER

PHILADELPHIA

1937

S  
362.509748  
B236 t

COPYRIGHT, 1937  
By DAVID K. BRUNER

## Preface

Economy in public expenditures through consolidation of small governmental units, particularly for poor relief and school administration, has become a matter of general public interest since the depression. Widespread unemployment has forced attention upon relief administration and upon the possibility of coordinating the various forms of public relief, which in Pennsylvania now include poor relief, mothers' assistance, veterans' assistance, pensions for the blind, old age assistance and unemployment relief. The growing movement for county welfare units is an effort to secure efficiency and economy through larger territorial units and the unification of these forms of assistance.

This study comparing poor relief administration in the seventeen Pennsylvania counties not on a county unit basis with that in the fifty county units of the state shows the facts bear out the contention that on the whole small districts provide less adequate service to the needy, and at a higher cost, than county units. It was made in connection with the state-wide study of poor relief conducted by the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare in 1934, largely as a Civil Works Administration project, and complete data on which the present report is based are on file with the Department of Welfare. The appendix tables herein are reprinted from the report of the state-wide study, "Poor Relief Administration in Pennsylvania," while the maps and chart II are adapted from the report.

Special acknowledgment is due the directors of the poor throughout the state who provided the information making this and the general study possible. The counsel of Professor Carl Kelsey and Professor James H. S. Bossard of the University of Pennsylvania, and of F. Richard Stilwell of the Bureau of Community Work of the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, director of the general study, have been of particular aid to the writer, who also wishes to express his appreciation to the members of the study staff. For the conclusions drawn, however, the writer assumes responsibility. Since the acceptance of this study as a thesis by the Graduate School of the University of Pennsylvania in 1935 no further information has come to light which would change the conclusions or the reasons therefor.

Pittsburgh, Pa.  
October, 1936

David K. Bruner



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2015

## CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I Purpose and Scope of the Study . . . . .	1
II Organization and Development of the Township and Borough System of Poor Relief in Pennsylvania . . . . .	9
III Poor Relief Expenditures . . . . .	23
IV Financial Administration . . . . .	39
V Local Organization and Personnel . . . . .	51
VI The Township and Borough District Almshouse.	61
VII The Administration of Outdoor Relief . . . .	73
VIII Special Forms of Outdoor Relief . . . . .	97
IX Care of Dependent Children . . . . .	105
X Poor Boards and Unemployment Relief . . . .	113
XI Poor Relief in Allegheny and Philadelphia Counties . . . . .	119
XII Summary and Conclusions . . . . .	127
Appendix	
A. Additional Tables . . . . .	133
B. Summary of Schedules Used . . . . .	159
Bibliography . . . . .	161
Index . . . . .	167





## Tables

Number	Page
1. Total Number of Poor Districts and Number Included in State-wide Study of Poor Relief in Counties Having More than One District . . . . .	5
2. Classified Population (1930) of Poor Districts by Type of Organization . . . . .	12
3. Total Public Welfare and Relief Expenditures in Pennsylvania Exclusive of State and Federal Unemployment Relief, 1933 . . . . .	25
4. Total Public Welfare and Relief Expenditures in Pennsylvania from All Sources, 1933 . . . . .	26
5. Average Per Capita Welfare and Relief Expenditures by Poor Districts and County Governments in Counties Having Various Types of Poor Relief Organization, 1933 . . . . .	28
6. Total Welfare and Relief Expenditures by County Governments and Poor Districts in Counties Having Various Types of Poor Relief Organization, with Per Cent Disbursed by Each, 1933 . . . . .	28
7. Poor Relief Expenditures, Including Extraordinary Expenditures, by Type of Poor District, 1933 . . .	30
8. Comparative Classified Expenditures by Poor Boards, 1923 and 1930-1933 Inclusive . . . . .	37
9. Number of Individuals Receiving Outdoor Relief and Total and Per Capita Outdoor Relief Expenditures, by Type of Poor District, 1933 . . . .	38
10. Total of Poor Tax Levies and Per Cent Collected during Current Year, 1928-1932 . . . . .	42
11. Method of Granting Food and Clothing . . . . .	48
12. Number of Poor Relief Administrators Provided by Law . . . . .	53

## Tables

Number	Page
13. Private Occupation of Each Poor Director in 302 Districts Covered by Personnel Study . . . . .	55,56
14. Number of Almshouses Maintaining Classified Average Daily Number of Inmates . . . . .	66
15. Almshouse Population on December 31 of Each Year and Almshouse Expenditures during Each Year, 1923-1933 Inclusive . . . . .	67
16. Almshouse Daily Per Capita Costs, by Type of Poor District . . . . .	70
17. Districts Having Classified Numbers of Outdoor Relief Cases, March 1, 1934 . . . . .	76
18. Districts Requiring Order from Justice of the Peace . . . . .	79
19. Usual and Maximum Weekly Grants of Relief to Families of Five . . . . .	87
20. Usual and Maximum Weekly Grants of Relief to Single Persons . . . . .	88
21. Number and Per Cent of Districts Refusing Aid for Particular Reasons Other than Lack of Funds . . . .	90
22. Extent of Boarding Out of Adults . . . . .	98
23. Expenditures from Local Tax Funds for Care of Dependent Children Away from Their Own Homes in Districts Having Various Types of Poor Relief Organization, 1933 . . . . .	107
24. Responsibility for Public Work with Dependent Children . . . . .	108

## Appendix A

25. Location, Population, Area, Date of Origin, and Number and Remuneration of Directors of Pennsylvania's 425 Poor Districts . . . . .	134
26. Poor Relief Expenditures Reported by Poor Boards to the Department of Welfare, 1933, by Districts and Functions . . . . .	146
27. Analysis of Poor Board Expenditures from the "First Talbot Fund," by Counties . . . . .	150

## Maps

	Page
Public Relief Resources in Pennsylvania . . . . .	7
Organization of Poor Relief in Pennsylvania by Counties, 1934 . . . . .	8
Location and Population of Almshouses in Pennsylvania, December 31, 1933 . . . . .	63
Poor Relief Organization in the City and County of Philadelphia . . . . .	122

## Charts

Chart	Page
I. Percentage Distribution of County Units and Other Districts by Population Class . . . . .	14
II. Distribution of Total State Population and Total 1933 Expenditures of Poor Boards Accord- ing to Types of Poor Relief Organization . . . .	27
III. Almshouse Population on December 31 of Each Year and Total Almshouse Expenditures during Each Year, 1923-1933 Inclusive . . . . .	67.



## Chapter I

### Purpose and Scope of Study

#### Summary

The term "township and borough system" is used to describe poor relief organization in the fifteen counties where townships, boroughs, or combinations of these constitute poor districts, and by analogy the special systems in Philadelphia and Allegheny Counties.

The purpose of this study is to compare township and borough poor districts with county units as to volume, cost and administration of relief, and the relation of poor boards to other welfare services, as a basis for evaluating the system.

The movement to eliminate duplication in small governmental units, the rising public interest in relief, increasing state participation in financing and administration of local welfare, the gradual transfer from poor boards of responsibility for special classes of dependents and the movement to combine these services in a single county welfare unit lend significance to such a comparison.

This comparison is based on comprehensive data secured in a study under the auspices of the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare of outdoor relief practices, almshouses, local expenditures and financial administration, and the statutes governing poor relief in the state.

---

Fifty of Pennsylvania's sixty-seven counties operate as units in the administration of poor relief; the other seventeen comprise a total of 375 districts, each with its separate poor board, separate tax levy, and independent relief policy. Most of these districts are either townships or boroughs, and the multi-unit organization may broadly be termed, therefore, the township and borough system of poor relief. Briefly, the present study deals with the volume, cost and methods of administering relief in these districts, in comparison with the county units as a group, and with the relation of these poor boards to other welfare agencies, public and private.

"Township and borough system" is not a completely satisfactory term, but it does characterize correctly the organization of most districts in the counties under consideration. All but 25 of the 375 districts are either townships or boroughs, which implies that they are relatively small in population and area and with some exceptions are governed by the same poor relief statutes. "Multi-unit system" is an awkward and unfamiliar term and does not connote the small size which is characteristic. "Small districts" is indefinite, and the smallest of the county units is not so large as some of the other districts.

The term "township and borough system" is therefore used as a general description of poor relief organization wherein counties are divided into smaller districts, as distinguished from county units. Fifteen counties have the township and borough system proper, while Allegheny and Philadelphia Counties, with two and seven districts respectively, are also included. Since the study shows that larger districts have better relief administration on the whole than the smaller, the effect of including these is favorable to the township and borough group rather than otherwise.

#### Significance and Purpose of the Study

Since 1929 the average citizen has become both tax-conscious and relief-conscious. The wastefulness inherent in a complicated system of small local governmental units becomes headline material, and it is seriously proposed that townships be abolished altogether. Relief has moved over to the respectable side of the tracks, so to speak, so that almost everyone has had a neighbor on relief or received it himself. The social workers and social reformers who have long been pointing out the inefficiency of public poor relief practices find themselves reinforced by taxpayers' leagues and others whose primary interest is in the public, and private, pocketbook.

Poor board practices are significant also, from the standpoint of economy or of social service, in view of the withdrawal by legislation over a period of decades of various special classes of dependents from the poor board's responsibility. The first poor boards in Pennsylvania were



charged with all public care of the poor, but one type of dependent after another has been transferred to other responsibility. The insane, the feeble-minded, children, epileptics and the unemployed have been, under the law at least, removed from the almshouse. Five of the six forms of public relief now operating in Pennsylvania are under other than poor board authority. The 967 poor directors supervise poor relief; mothers' assistance and, beginning in 1934, pensions for the blind and old age assistance are supervised by the Department of Welfare, in most counties with a single administrative body for the three services; unemployment relief, after the unsatisfactory experience of poor board administration under the First Talbot Act, is administered by the State Emergency Relief Administration; and veterans' relief is in the hands of the Pennsylvania Veterans' Commission and local veterans' groups. It is now being suggested that a single county welfare board providing trained service could better perform all or most of these services, reducing the number of agencies from 537 to 67, or even less if counties combine into districts.

Besides the general movement for economy in local government there is a specific movement toward the county as the unit of poor relief administration in Pennsylvania as in other states. Among poor directors of the state, particularly those in county units, there is considerable sentiment for abolishing township and borough districts. The Legislative Committee of their state organization in its report to the 1933 convention stated:

It would be to the best interests of our Association and of its constituent members to urge the adoption of the county wide Poor District in those counties which still have the borough and township districts. Special consideration will have to be given to the counties of the first and second class because of the peculiar conditions. <sup>1/</sup> Carrying the principle of unification a step further, the Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania has led a movement for county boards of welfare which would combine the functions of the present poor boards with most or all the responsibilities for special classes of dependents enumerated above. The plan has met almost unanimous opposition from the poor directors.

---

<sup>1/</sup> *Proceedings of the Annual Convention of the Pennsylvania Association of Directors of the Poor and Charities and Correction, 1933*, p. 44.

The township and borough system, inherited in all essentials from William Penn's England, and for that matter from the famous Act of Elizabeth 43 which in 1601 gave legal recognition to the parish system then functioning, has long been a target of criticism and a rallying point of defense. The system is attacked as archaic, as representing, in the words of the critics, "an 1870 model on an Elizabethan chassis," or "an oxcart system in a motor age." It is defended, on the other hand, as a cheap and efficient way of giving public relief and of enlisting the services of public-spirited citizens, and as the last bulwark of home rule against centralization in government.

The purpose of the present study is to examine the administration of relief, particularly outdoor relief, in the township and borough districts and to compare it with administration under the county unit system. On the basis of data provided by the poor boards of the state it should be possible to determine whether the smoke indicates fire or, as some advocates of the present system maintain, merely a political gas attack. In dealing with such a question it is difficult to avoid bias, but the attempt is made to present both good and bad features wherever either is found.

### Scope and Method of the Study

Such a comparison involves the analysis of data for the state classified in the two major divisions. The material for such a breakdown was made available for the first time by a state-wide study of poor relief made in 1934 under the auspices of the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare. <sup>2/</sup> The works programs of the State Emergency Relief Board made it possible to broaden the scope of a study under consideration by the Department designed to discover changes in Pennsylvania poor relief since its study in 1925. <sup>3/</sup> Outdoor relief, almshouse, financial and statistical, and legal aspects of poor relief were included. The State Emergency Relief Board cooperated through its successive works divisions (Civil Works Administration, Local Works Division, and Relief Works Division), and its research division. The American Public Welfare Association, the Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania and other public and pri-

<sup>2/</sup> *Poor Relief Administration in Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, Bulletin No. 61, 1934.)

<sup>3/</sup> Emil Frankel, *Poor Relief in Pennsylvania--A State-Wide Survey* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, Bulletin No. 21, 1925.)



vate agencies provided information and consultation service, and the Pennsylvania Department of Internal Affairs gave special assistance in securing financial data. The extent of the study is evidence of the cooperation of literally hundreds of poor directors and their employes in making available the data for their districts.

The information on outdoor relief administration was secured through field visits involving interviews with poor board officials in 302 of the total 425 poor districts in the state, including all county units and all other districts except 123 townships and boroughs having a combined population amounting to only 1.1 per cent of the state total. A representative number of districts was included in each county under the township and borough system, including at least 60 per cent in each population class and all districts having more than 25,000 population. Only one district not studied had a population over 10,000 according to the 1930 census. The number of districts included in this and the financial section of the study, by county, is shown in Table 1, while the number for the study of outdoor relief, by population and type of poor relief organization, is given in Table 2. One or more directors in each dis-

TABLE 1

TOTAL NUMBER OF POOR DISTRICTS AND NUMBER INCLUDED IN STATE-WIDE STUDY OF POOR RELIEF IN COUNTIES HAVING MORE THAN ONE DISTRICT

County	Included in			Not Included in Social or Financial Study	Total Number of Districts
	Social and Financial Study	Social Study Only	Financial Study Only		
Allegheny	2	-	-	-	2
Cameron	-	6	-	1	7
Carbon	1 (a)	14	-	-	15
Centre	4	17	1	14	36
Columbia	2	10	-	16	28
Fulton	-	12	-	-	12
Juniata	-	16	-	1	17
Lackawanna	18 (b)	3	-	-	21
Luzerne	11	3	6	16	36
Lycoming	21	13	4	14	52
Montour	-	10	-	-	10
Northumberland	15	5	3	13	36
Philadelphia	1	6	-	-	7
Snyder	-	9	-	11	20
Susquehanna	26	3	-	6	35
Union	-	11	-	3	14
Wayne	-	13	-	14	27
Total	101	151	14	109	375

(a) Middle Coal Field Poor District, partly in Luzerne County.

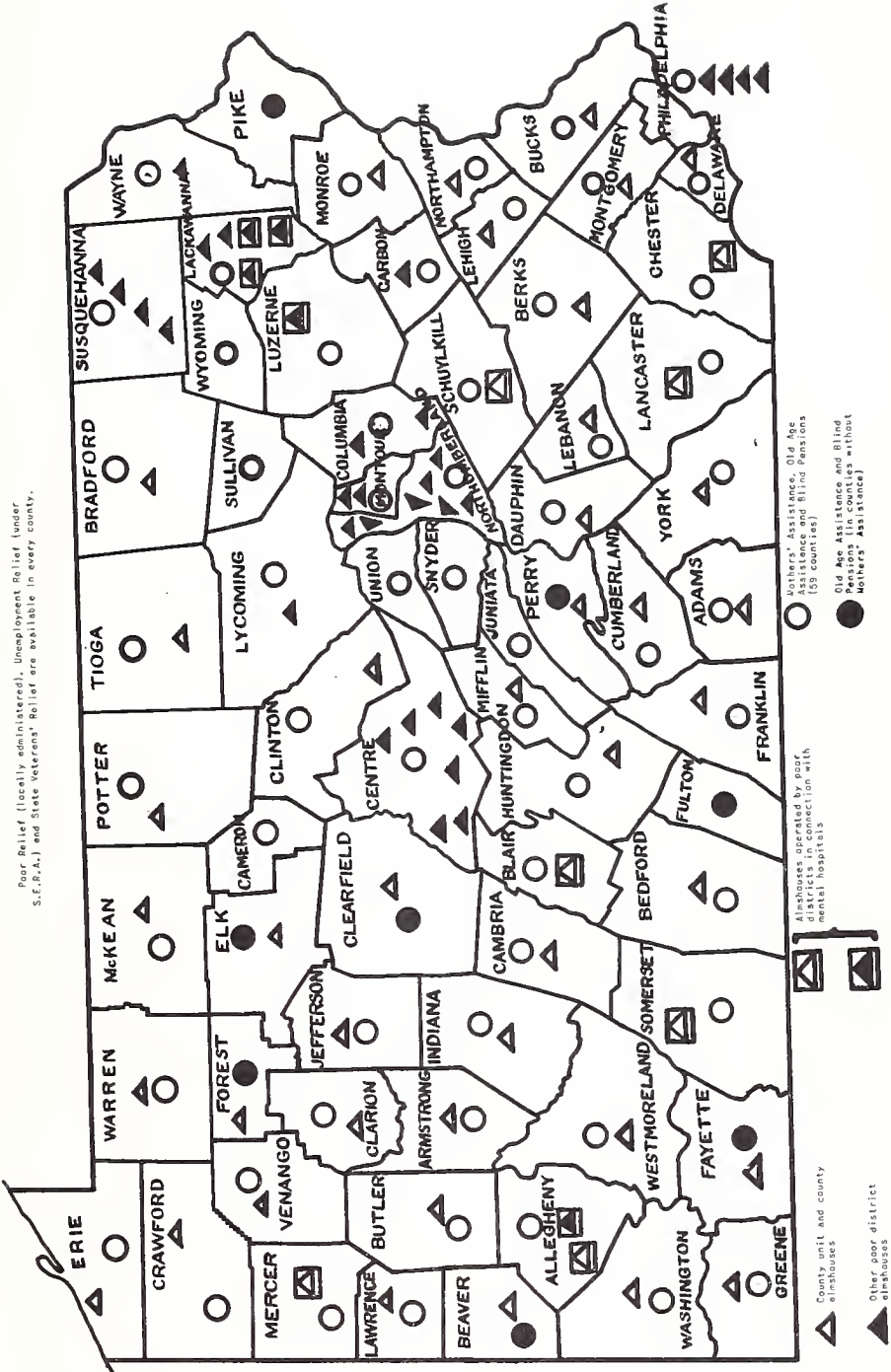
(b) Includes Jenkins Township, Pittston City and Pittston Township Poor District, partly in Luzerne County.

trict was interviewed, and in most cases poor board employes and workers in local welfare agencies as well. Reliance was placed chiefly on information from poor directors except in the study of case records, where made. Any information which appears to be unfavorable thus represents in practically all cases what the directors themselves reported to the field workers, who were instructed to quote directly wherever possible. The field personnel were with very few exceptions persons with training or experience in social research or social work. The schedule used is summarized in Appendix B.

The almshouse study utilized records of inspections by the Department of Welfare and reports to the Department, and detailed schedules formed the basis of an evaluation of poor farms. The financial and statistical section involved analysis of the annual financial reports made by poor districts to the Department of Welfare and of published county audits; a compilation for each county, so far as possible, of all welfare expenditures by poor districts, county commissioners and the state in 1933, and detailed field studies of records and accounting methods in 19 county units and 115 other districts, utilizing a schedule summarized in Appendix B. The legal section involved a survey of Pennsylvania statutes dealing with relief and a digest of local and special laws for each district, as well as a questionnaire to each poor board requesting information as to the statutes under which it functioned and the terms of election and payment of poor directors and auditors. In addition a summary of the history and organization of poor relief in the state was prepared. The present study analyzes the mass of data thus secured to discover similarities and differences in county unit and township and borough administration.

# PUBLIC RELIEF RESOURCES IN PENNSYLVANIA

Poor Relief (locally administered), Unemployment Relief (under S.F.R.A.) and State Veterans' Relief are available in every county.



Adapted from Poor Relief Administration, in Pennsylvania, p. 24.

[illegible]

a/ Licking County voted in 1999 to accept the county unit plan.  
b/ Lickensburg, Licking and Northumberland Counties each have one city district.



## Chapter II

### Organization and Development

#### Summary

The counties under the township and borough system, exclusive of Allegheny and Philadelphia, represent agricultural or anthracite regions, lying diagonally across the state from the northeastern corner. They comprise one-sixth of the state population and one-fifth of the total cases receiving relief at the time of the study in all districts studied. With Allegheny and Philadelphia Counties included, these counties account for 375 of Pennsylvania's 425 poor districts and 814 of the 967 poor directors legally provided for.

The 375 districts consist of 259 township districts; 91 borough districts; 5 city or municipal districts; 13 mixed districts, 2 of which include parts of two counties; 6 independent Philadelphia districts based upon former townships and boroughs; and Allegheny County Poor District, covering the county exclusive of the city of Pittsburgh. Their generally small size makes for inefficiency. Although state poor law commissions of 1921-1925, 1915, 1890 and 1830-1833 recommended abolition of township and borough districts, there were only seven fewer counties under the system in 1934 than in 1925, and during that period five had reverted from the county unit plan.

The exact number of statutes governing poor relief administration in Pennsylvania (more than five hundred, many affecting single districts) cannot be stated because it is undetermined which are superseded by the General Poor Relief Act of 1925, which is the basic authority. Essentially they represent a modification of English poor law traceable to 43 Elizabeth, cap. II (1601), and the earlier laws of Henry VIII. Township and borough districts derive from the English parish unit; legal settlement is fundamentally the same, fostering litigation under the combination of small districts and a mobile population; orders for relief by justices of the peace persist from Elizabethan days, particularly in township and borough districts, despite a specific prohibition in the 1925 Act.

Under existing law the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare is responsible for inspection and a degree of supervision of almshouses and records, and of agencies for the care of dependent children. Between poor boards and the State and County Emergency Relief Boards the theoretically clear division of function based on employability breaks down over definition of the term and the transfer to emergency relief in many areas of poor board cases to lighten the local financial load. Many directors feel strongly that they should administer unemployment relief. Private welfare agencies as a rule are not regularly used by township and borough poor boards, except in the care of dependent children, and there is no clear division of responsibility in most districts.

---

Fifteen counties organized under the township and borough system of poor relief form a sort of belt stretching diagonally across Pennsylvania from the northeastern corner along the ridge of the Allegheny Mountains, as shown by the map introducing this chapter. They are concentrated, broadly speaking, along the lines of migration and influence from New England. Allegheny and Philadelphia Counties lie outside the belt at the borders of the state. Excluding the latter two, they are predominantly rural or anthracite mining counties, containing one-sixth of the state's population and one-fifth of the cases receiving relief at the time of the study in all districts studied. If the Philadelphia independent districts and the Allegheny County Poor District are included, the proportion of population becomes one-fourth and of cases one-half, due to the fact that 29 per cent of the total cases reported was in the latter district (see Chapter VII). These seventeen counties include 375 of the total 425 Pennsylvania poor districts and 814, or 84 per cent, of the 967 administrators of poor relief provided for by statute. The number of poor districts in each of these counties is shown in Table 1, and a complete list of poor districts with data on their organization is given in Table 25, Appendix A.

#### Organization of Poor Districts

The counties having a single county-wide poor district represent two chief types of organization, with elected directors of the poor in twenty-six cases and the county commissioners acting as a poor board in twenty-two. In Westmoreland County elected directors of a home for the

destitute serve as poor directors. In Erie County a change was made in 1934, as a result of public dissatisfaction with local poor relief administration, from elected directors to an unpaid board of three members appointed by the court of quarter sessions. Appointment and service without salary are features of one plan for county welfare boards proposed to improve relief administration, incidentally.

Of the remaining 375 districts, 259 are townships and 91 are boroughs, usually with elected directors or overseers of the poor. The other 25 districts include 5 city or municipal districts in Carbondale, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Sunbury and Williamsport; 13 mixed districts, including 2 covering parts of two counties; 6 independent districts in Philadelphia; and Allegheny County Poor District (see Table 2). Considering the types of organization listed, and further variations due to special laws or local tradition, the lack of uniformity in poor relief administration is obvious.

Mixed districts are those formed by the joining of two or more local governmental units for poor relief purposes, usually in order to maintain an almshouse. They are as follows, with their population according to the 1930 United States census:

Carbon and Luzerne Counties: Middle Coal Field Poor District, including in Carbon County 4 townships and 6 boroughs; in Luzerne County 2 townships, 3 boroughs and 1 city. 116,321.

Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties: Jenkins Township, Pittston City and Pittston Township Poor District, including in Lackawanna County 1 township, 3 boroughs and the 22nd Ward of the City of Scranton; in Luzerne County, 2 townships, 6 boroughs and 1 city. 85,484.

Columbia County: Bloom Poor District, including in three non-contiguous tracts 3 townships, 1 borough, and Pennsylvania's only town, Bloomsburg. 12,891.

Centralia Borough and Conyngham Township Poor District, including 1 township and 1 borough. 5,178.

TABLE 2

CLASSIFIED POPULATION (1930) OF POOR DISTRICTS BY TYPE OF ORGANIZATION  
425 Districts  
(Including Philadelphia and Pittsburgh Departments of Public Welfare)

Population	County Units			Townships and Boroughs			City Districts			Mixed Districts <sup>(a)</sup>			Allegheny Co. (Exclusive of Pittsburgh)			Philadelphia (Independent Districts)			Total			Per Cent of Poor Districts Included in Social Study
	Social Study	Other	Total	Social Study	Other	Total	Social Study	Other	Total	Social Study	Other	Total	Social Study	Other	Total	Social Study	Other	Total	Social Study	Other	Total	
0-499	-	-	-	59	36	95	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	59	36	95	62.1
500-999	-	-	-	83	52	135	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	84	52	136	61.7
1000-2499	-	-	-	59	34	93	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	60	34	94	63.8
2500-4999	-	-	-	14	-	14	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	-	16	100.0
5000-9999	3	-	3	11	-	11	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	-	16	100.0
10,000-24,999	3	-	3	1	1	2	2	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	1	10	90.0
25,000-49,999	12	-	12	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	-	15	100.0
50,000-99,999	15	-	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	-	17	100.0
100,000-249,999	14	-	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	-	19	100.0
250,000 & over	3 <sup>(b)</sup>	-	3	-	-	-	2 <sup>(c)</sup>	-	-	1 <sup>(d)</sup>	-	1	1 <sup>(e)</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	100.0
Total	50	-	50	227	123	350	5	-	5	13	-	13	1	-	1	6	-	-	302 <sup>(f)</sup>	123	425	71.0

(a) Inter-county: Middle Coal Field and Pittston-Jenkins.

(b) Delaware - 280,264

Montgomery - 265,804

Westmoreland - 294,995

(c) Pittsburgh - 669,817

Philadelphia - 1,541,615

(d) Central Poor District - 275,374

(e) 704,593

(f) Includes a population of 9,521,970 in the 302 districts studied, or 98.9 per cent of the entire population of the State.



Lackawanna County: Blakely Poor District, including 6 boroughs and 1 1/2 wards of Jermyrn Borough. 59,220 (estimated).

Lakeview Poor District, including 8 townships and 6 boroughs. 13,555.

Scranton Poor District, including 1 borough and the City of Scranton except the 22nd Ward. 161,221.

Luzerne County: Central Poor District, including 6 townships, 18 boroughs, and the City of Wilkes-Barre. 275,374.

Montour County: Danville Borough and Mahoning Township Poor District, including 1 township and 1 borough. 10,513.

Northumberland County: Shamokin Borough and Coal Township Poor District, including 1 township and 1 borough. 40,203.

Susquehanna County: Auburn and Rush Poor District, including 4 townships. 3,362.

Susquehanna Depot and Oakland Township Poor District, including 1 township and 2 boroughs. 4,697.

Wayne County: Honesdale Borough and Texas Township Poor District, including 1 township and 1 borough. 6,849.

The Philadelphia independent districts preserve for poor relief purposes only township and borough lines otherwise abolished in 1854 when city and county boundaries were consolidated. Two are rural in character, with estimated population of approximately 800 and 1300 respectively, while three have a population of over 100,000. No district exactly coincides with present ward boundaries, so that voters may live in one poor district and vote for poor officials who serve in a neighboring district. Special laws govern poor relief administration for the most part. While these districts include more than half the city area, the municipal district operating in the remainder includes

CHART I

Percentage Distribution of County Units and Other Districts  
by Population Class\*

(Each Bar represents 100 per cent)



COUNTY UNITS



OTHER DISTRICTS



UNDER 1,000



\*Based on data in Table 2.

five-sixths of the 1930 population. The Allegheny County Poor District, in many ways resembling a county unit, covers the county exclusive of the City of Pittsburgh. The two counties are discussed more fully in Chapter XI.

The small size of the districts under the township and borough appears clearly in Table 2. Only 13 of the townships or boroughs have more than 5,000 population according to the 1930 census, and none has more than 25,000. Among all the 375 districts other than county units, only 34 are above 5,000 in population, and only 14 above 25,000. The smallest districts are Friendsville Borough, Susquehanna County, with a population of 74, and Gouldsboro Borough, Lackawanna County, with 76. On the other hand no county unit falls under 5,000 population, and only 6 under 25,000.

The implications of small administrative units for various phases of poor relief appears in succeeding chapters. Duplication of personnel as compared with county units is obvious, although the fact that in township and borough districts directors generally serve without salary, and resultant effects on administrative efficiency, must be considered in judging the question of economy. In any case there is duplication of clerical personnel and auditors, who are paid. Since the position of poor director and to a lesser extent that of auditor carry prestige and in the latter case payment, usable as political reward, forty or fifty such posts in a county cannot be lightly abolished. The effect of the small unit on the quality of outdoor relief and almshouse administration is apparent.

### Origins and Development of the Township and Borough System

The present nature and extent of the township and borough system in Pennsylvania can be understood only in the light of its origins and earlier history. The system is a survival: that is its essential characteristic. The earlier history of the township and borough system is the history of all poor relief in Pennsylvania, and in England from the time of Henry VIII until after the American Revolution.

The system has survived a long series of recommendations for its abolition. The recommendation by the legislative committee of the Association of Directors of the

Poor of Pennsylvania at the 1933 meeting, cited above, is preceded by the committee's report of efforts against bills introduced in the 1933 session of the legislature which would have permitted a vote in Clinton and Wyoming Counties on a return to the township and borough system. 1/ The Poor Law Commission reporting in 1925, 2/ the Pennsylvania Dependents Commission in 1915, 3/ and the Poor Law Commission of 1890 4/ all recommended that the county be made the administrative unit. The three commissions were appointed at the request of the Association of Directors of the Poor, which was organized in 1876 primarily to consider difficulties arising from the confusion of the poor laws and at its first meeting passed a resolution favoring their revision. 5/ One must go back a century to find the first recommendation by a legislative commission that the county be made the unit of poor relief, in 1833. 6/ The first county units, Chester and Lancaster Counties, were established in 1798.

There were only seven fewer districts under the township and borough system in 1934 than in 1925. Clinton County in 1929 and McKean in 1931 became county units; Lycoming County citizens voted by an eight-to-five majority in 1929 to establish a county unit, but continues with fifty-two districts; and in 1927 five counties (Cameron, Fulton, Juniata, Snyder and Union) reverted to township and borough organization, in what was considered locally as an economy move.

The adoption of English poor law with modifications to fit American conditions in early Pennsylvania has been traced in detail by William C. Heffner. 7/ The statutes containing the fundamentals of the present poor law in Pennsylvania begin, as he and others point out, with statutes of Henry VIII in 1536 designed to repress begging (22 Henry VIII, cap. XII). The real foundation of English and

1/ *Proceedings of the Annual Convention of the Pennsylvania Association of Directors of the Poor and Charities and Correction*, 1933, p. 42.

2/ *Report and Recommendations of the Commission to Codify and Revise the laws Relating to Poor Districts and the Care of the Poor* (Harrisburg, 1925) pp. 25ff

3/ *Pennsylvania Dependents; Report and Recommendations of the Pennsylvania Dependents Commission* (Harrisburg, 1915), p. 78.

4/ *General Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Revise and Codify the laws Relating to the Relief, Care and Maintenance of the Poor in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, 1890), p. 45.

5/ *Proceedings of the Convention of the Directors of the Poor and Board of Public Charities of the State of Pennsylvania*, 1876, p. 17.

6/ *General Report of the Commissioners....in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, 1890), pp. 38-40.

7/ *History of Poor Relief Legislation in Pennsylvania 1682-1913* (Cleona, Pennsylvania: Holzapfel Publishing Co., 1913), Chapt. I-VI.



Pennsylvania poor law is usually considered the famous 43 Elizabeth, cap. II, of 1601 on which was directly based Pennsylvania's first general poor relief act of 1705. The Act of Elizabeth recognized public responsibility for care of the poor and the principle of taxation for such care, and provided for overseers of the poor with the parish as the unit. It included other provisions concerning the care of dependent children, public employment for the able-bodied poor, and the responsibility of relatives for support. 8/

The Thirty-Second Law of "The Great Law" passed by William Penn's first assembly in 1682 placed responsibility for care of the indigent in the hands of the county court, with "the next Justice of the Peace" in the county providing relief until court sessions. 9/ The first general poor law, in 1705, made the township the poor district, with overseers of the poor.

Since the days of William Penn there have been only four general poor laws or general revisions of poor law in Pennsylvania: the general poor law of 1705, 10/ supplemented by the General Settlement Act of 1718; 11/ the first revision in 1771, 12/ the second revision in 1836, 13/ and the General Poor Relief Act of 1925. 14/ A flood of laws limited in scope, including hundreds mentioning local districts by name before and after such special legislation was curtailed by the Constitution of 1874, complicate the picture. Frankel stated in 1925 that there were 1400 poor laws on the statute books, including more than 800 which were local and special. 15/ Because of conflicting court decisions as to the extent and respects in which the General Poor Relief Act of 1925 supersedes earlier local legislation and the numerous points on which there is no court decision, it was found impossible to make an exact count of the more than 500 statutes in force in 1934. 16/

---

8/ *Ibid.*, pp. 21, 22.

9/ *Charter to William Penn and Laws of the Province of Pennsylvania, 1682-1700, Preceded by the Duke of York's Laws 1676-1682.* (Harrisburg, 1879), p. 115. Cited by Heffner, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

10/ *Statutes-at-Large of Pennsylvania*, Vol. II, 1705, January 12, Chapter CLIV.

11/ *Ibid.*, Vol. III, 1718, May 31, Chapt. CCXXXVII.

12/ *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, 1771, October 9, Chap. DCXXXV.

13/ 1836, June 13, P.L. 539.

14/ 1925, May 14, P.L. 762.

15/ *Op. cit.*, p. 11.

16/ See Poor Relief Administration in Pennsylvania, Part V.

One can sympathize with the conviction expressed by a speaker at the 1883 convention of poor directors of the need for more application of common sense and understanding to poor relief and less attention to legislation. <sup>17/</sup>

The General Poor Relief Act of 1925 is based upon the recommendations of the Poor Law Commission appointed in 1921. Warned by the fate in the legislature of the proposals for basic reforms of the 1890 commission, this body made less sweeping recommendations. Nevertheless the legislature made many changes in the drafted bill, as a result of which there is some confusion as to whether provisions regarding the auditing of accounts and the granting of expenses to unpaid poor directors, among others, apply to the township and borough districts as well as to county units. (see Chapter III).

#### Today's Heritage from Early Poor Law

Darwin spoke of man's vermiform appendix and ear-wiggling muscles as vestigial remnants, persisting in the process of evolution after their function has disappeared. Some critics see the township and borough system as playing the same role in social change, continuing long after the pioneer conditions which made the early Pennsylvanians turn to local overseers of the poor had disappeared, and after responsibility for one class of dependents after another had been transferred to the county or the state in the interest of adequate care and more efficient administration. In the meantime England, it might be noted, had largely abandoned the old relief methods for a system of social insurance twenty years ago.

The township or borough as the unit of poor relief administration has been handed down from pioneer days in America and is an adaptation of the parish system of Shakespeare's England. The General Poor Relief Act of 1925 for the first time recognizes the township and borough system as a survival in making the county the basic unit. In all previous legislation the county unit was treated as the exception.

The present settlement laws in Pennsylvania retain the

---

<sup>17/</sup> *Proceedings of the Convention of the Directors of the Poor and Board of Charities, 1883, p. 73.*

spirit and basic provisions of Elizabethan law, in which the primary concern is with conserving public funds rather than providing for indigent persons. In broad outline, the provisions require one year's residence in a poor district to establish legal settlement, with the settlement of wife and children following that of the husband or father. Poor boards are empowered, as they have always been, to remove to his last known settlement any person becoming a public charge in their district. It is desirable that financial responsibility be legally defined; but under twentieth century industrial conditions hardship frequently arises when a man must have lived for a year in a single township or borough to establish his right to local relief. The effect on present practices is discussed in Chapter VIII. Having 67 units instead of 425 would reduce the legal expenses of poor boards and provide more adequate relief. It is the smallness of the district which produces the greatest injustice and multiplies friction between districts. The question is broader than inter-county, of course, as shown by organization of the Federal Transient Bureau as part of the unemployment relief program.

A survival of earlier practices found almost solely in the small districts is that of requiring orders from a justice of the peace for some or all cases, despite specific prohibition by the 1925 Act. <sup>18/</sup> Altogether 89 districts, besides 5 county units, were reported to require such orders in some cases (cf. Chapter VII). It is not surprising that many citizens are unaware of the prohibition, since several poor directors interviewed did not know there was a General Poor Relief Act of 1925. This function of the justice of the peace dates definitely from the Elizabethan law, which itself recognized as suited to local government of that day a practice already established.

Another survival is the appropriation of certain fines for the poor fund. The 1925 Act (Sec. 1300) provides penalties for failure to turn over such fines, most of which are designated for the poor by the Act of 1836. While it is difficult to know just what provisions are now valid, offenses for which fines imposed have at various times been assigned to the poor fund include selling liquors or drinking in taverns on Sunday; the keeping of a tavern or maintaining an office in a tavern by a justice of the peace;

---

18/ 1925, May 14, P.L. 762, Sec 2 (h).

disqualification as burgess or the holding of incompatible offices; cutting ferry ropes or failure to sink them; blasphemy, betting on elections, cockfighting, and failure to furnish mineral statistics to the Auditor General; in Delaware County, hunting on improved lands after warning; and in Philadelphia, shooting pigeons. The financial section of the poor relief study provides no statistics on income from this source.

The mere fact of survival does not constitute an argument against a system of poor relief; survival may be cited likewise as good reason for continuance. The facts as disclosed in the 1934 study are discussed in succeeding chapters. In general they bear out the conclusions of the 1890 Poor Law Commission, which conceded the validity of arguments by advocates of the township and borough system that the possibility of fraud is lessened because directors and other citizens know the indigent personally, and that since taxpayers in the township are more acutely aware of the financial burden public opinion has more effect in urging paupers to better their status and compelling relatives to provide support; but after conceding it declared that there is more maladministration in the small district than under the county unit plan. 19/

#### Relation of Poor Boards to Other Welfare Agencies

The poor board is only one of the bodies and organizations concerned with provision for the needy, and its work must be considered in its setting as part of the total picture.

The poor districts of the state are separate governmental bodies independent of each other and under the township and borough system independent of other local governments. In view of the customary emphasis by poor officials on the financial rather than social aspects of relief, the existence of 375 districts instead of 17 county units multiplies the occasion for friction between districts, particularly over legal settlement and alleged cases of "dumping" paupers by transporting them to other districts. From their independence it follows also that methods and policies vary widely and what the taxpayer gets for his money or how much relief, if any, is allowed a par-



ticular type of case is largely a matter of geography. On one point the poor directors of the small districts as a rule show uniformity: opposition to county units. Even on this question, however, there is not unanimity. Many township and borough directors interviewed favor the county unit as a solution of their district's financial difficulties, relief from burdensome duties, or a way to provide better service to the poor.

The county commissioners bear a part of the responsibility for care of certain classes of dependents, particularly children away from their own homes and patients in mental hospitals. Comparative expenditures by commissioners and poor boards in county units are partly a matter of bookkeeping since in more than half there is an appropriation to the poor fund and not a separate poor tax. The proportion paid by the commissioners instead of poor authorities is much less in the township and borough counties, where welfare expenditures by the former tend in general to be limited to those which are mandatory. Division of the county into several districts naturally leads to frequent differences between county and poor district over jurisdiction and payment.

The \$10,000,000 state appropriation for unemployment relief under the First Talbot Act 20/ was administered in 1932 by local poor authorities without state supervision (cf. Chapter X). Partly as a result of inefficiencies and irregularities under this plan, and partly as a result of federal participation, unemployment relief has been administered on a county or area basis since the formation of the State Emergency Relief Board in September, 1932. Poor directors have been members of local advisory boards and in a few instances of County Emergency Relief Boards, but have not actually administered funds. There is a strong feeling by many directors that unemployment relief should be in their hands, and frequent instances of opposition to the present plan were revealed during the study. Theoretically, the unemployables are a poor board responsibility, while the County Emergency Relief Board's responsibility is for unemployment cases only. In practice a clear division is lacking in many counties, particularly since it is not easy to define employability. Poor boards, particularly in small districts, often turned over all their cases when county boards were organized, or have since turned over

---

20/ 1931, December 28, P.L. 1503.

some cases of unemployables to save money. While an attempt has been made to turn these back to the poor boards, many remain on the emergency relief rolls. In a number of districts the poor board is financially unable to meet its responsibility and the County Emergency Relief Board has stepped into the breach.

Under the General Poor Relief Act of 1925 the State Department of Welfare has the power to inspect almshouse buildings and grounds and to examine institutional records (Sec. 224) and prescribe the forms for such records (Sec. 500), and shall approve plans for almshouses or mental hospitals to be erected by poor districts (Sec. 700,715). The Department has also the power to supervise all agencies caring for dependent and neglected children and the premises where they are kept, and to promote county welfare boards to coordinate social welfare in the counties. <sup>21/</sup> An official letter from the Secretary of Welfare, with recommendations, follows each almshouse inspection. The payment by poor districts for care in state mental hospitals and other institutions under the direction of the Department provides another relationship. Informal conferences between poor directors and staff members of the Department are frequent, but less so in small districts. The Department has no supervision over outdoor relief; its sole power is apparently to receive annual reports, under Section 500.

As for private welfare agencies, the study shows the poor boards in township and borough districts do not make regular use of their services except in the care of dependent children. In the county units there is somewhat closer cooperation, but in few districts is there a clear division of community relief responsibility between them and the private agencies (cf. Chapter VI).

---

<sup>21/</sup> Administrative Code of 1929 (1929, April 9, P.L. 177), Art. XXIII.

## Chapter III

### Poor Relief Expenditures

#### Summary

The amount spent by Pennsylvania poor boards in 1933, \$14,668,846, is 37.4 per cent of the total public expenditures for relief and welfare in the state, excluding unemployment relief, and only 11.9 per cent if the latter is included, indicating the narrowed function of poor boards in the total welfare and relief picture.

Considering only local tax funds expended for relief and welfare by poor boards and county governments, the fifteen counties under the township and borough system (excluding Allegheny and Philadelphia) account for twice as high a proportion of expenditures as of population. In these fifteen the county government tends to limit its expenditures to those which are mandatory. Four-fifths of the total welfare and relief expenditures from local tax funds are made by poor boards rather than county commissioners, as compared with two-thirds of the total in the county units having separate poor directors.

Considering poor board disbursements alone, administration costs are less in the county units, comprising 13.3 per cent of the total as compared with 17.9 per cent for all other districts, excluding the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh Departments of Public Welfare. Relief, other than almshouse, constitutes a larger proportion in the county units, while for almshouse expenditures the proportion is the same. Duplication of overhead in the small units is a factor in their higher administrative costs. Statutes provide for salaries to poor directors in county units and a few other districts; payment without legal authorization is frequent in the townships and boroughs.

Since the depression began almshouse expenditures show an actual decrease in the face of increasing almshouse population. Outdoor relief expenditures rose rapidly, but 1933 showed a decline reflecting state and federal aid to the unemployed.

---

The rural origins of township and borough poor dis-

tricts, their lack of uniformity, and the narrowing responsibility of the poor boards in the total public welfare picture should be kept in mind in considering the character and methods of their expenditures. What the citizen's poor-tax dollar purchases is important as well as the price paid. The present chapter deals with expenditures, while later chapters on relief methods discuss the taxpayer's return for his money.

The total cost of public relief in Pennsylvania, including expenditures by poor boards and county governments and from state and federal funds, was compiled for the first time by the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare study. Various branches of the state government provided data on expenditures under their control. For local governmental units other than poor districts, data is from the official 1933 reports of audits. The sources are official, but the classification of items necessarily represents the judgment of the study staff. Discrepancies noted were checked by correspondence. For the poor boards the annual reports to the State Department of Welfare required by the General Poor Relief Act provide classified data over a period of years, and local auditors' reports were consulted for the larger districts and those maintaining mental hospitals. Discrepancies between the annual reports and those of the auditors were the exception rather than the rule, particularly since the former in some instances omitted extraordinary expenses such as large repayments and interest on loans. In compiling the total for comparison with federal, state and local expenses other than those of poor boards the audit reports were used, together with annual reports from those districts, including particularly townships and boroughs, where neither county commissioners' expenditures nor mental hospital costs were involved.

#### Poor Boards' Share of Relief and Welfare Expenditures

In compiling the total relief and welfare expenditures for 1933 in Pennsylvania only those county and state expenditures directly comparable to mandatory and discretionary expenditures of poor boards were used. They include care of dependent, delinquent and physically handicapped children, in or outside institutions, under public auspices or through payment to private institutions and agencies; expenditures for hospitals, institutional care of mentally



ill and defective persons, appropriations to health and other welfare agencies, burials, and a few unclassified disbursements. For many of these items both poor boards and county or State, or both, make expenditures.

The \$14,668,846 spent by the poor boards is only 37.4 per cent of the state total of \$39,189,631, when state and federal unemployment relief funds are excluded; while county commissioners spent 27.1 per cent and the state 35.5 per cent (Table 3). If state and federal expenditures for unemployment relief are included, the poor boards' share falls to 11.9 per cent, about one-eighth, of the total \$123,742,201 (Table 4). Two-fifths of this total is unemployment relief from federal funds. State and federal unemployment relief combined constituted 68.3 per cent of the total welfare disbursements in Pennsylvania, while the combined disbursements for welfare from local tax funds by poor boards and county commissioners form only one-fifth. To consider public poor relief in terms of poor districts alone is clearly to overlook the greater part of the picture.

Although the counties under the township and borough system, excluding Allegheny and Philadelphia, contain only

TABLE 3

TOTAL PUBLIC WELFARE AND RELIEF EXPENDITURES IN PENNSYLVANIA  
EXCLUSIVE OF STATE AND FEDERAL UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF, WITH PER CENT  
DISBURSED BY POOR BOARDS, COUNTY GOVERNMENTS AND STATE

1933

Expenditures by	Amount	Per Cent
Poor boards	\$14,668,846 <sup>(a)</sup>	37.4
County governments	19,628,875 <sup>(b)</sup>	27.1
State	13,891,910 <sup>(c)</sup>	35.5
Total	\$39,189,631	100.0

(a) Includes poor relief expenditures of county commissioners serving as directors of the poor.

(b) Includes expenditures by county commissioners in 66 counties and by city council (through departments other than the Department of Public Welfare in the City and County of Philadelphia.

(c) In addition to this sum an undetermined amount, probably in excess of one million dollars, was expended in 1933 from the state aid granted to poor boards under the First Talbot Act in December, 1931.

TABLE 4

TOTAL PUBLIC-WELFARE AND RELIEF EXPENDITURES IN  
PENNSYLVANIA FROM ALL SOURCES,  
WITH PER CENT DISBURSED BY EACH  
1933

Expenditures by	Amount	Per Cent
Poor boards	\$ 14,668,846	11.9
County governments	10,628,875	8.6
State	13,891,910	11.2
State Emergency Relief Board		
State <sup>(a)</sup>	33,905,581	27.4
Federal <sup>(a)</sup>	50,646,989	40.9
TOTAL	\$123,742,201	100.0

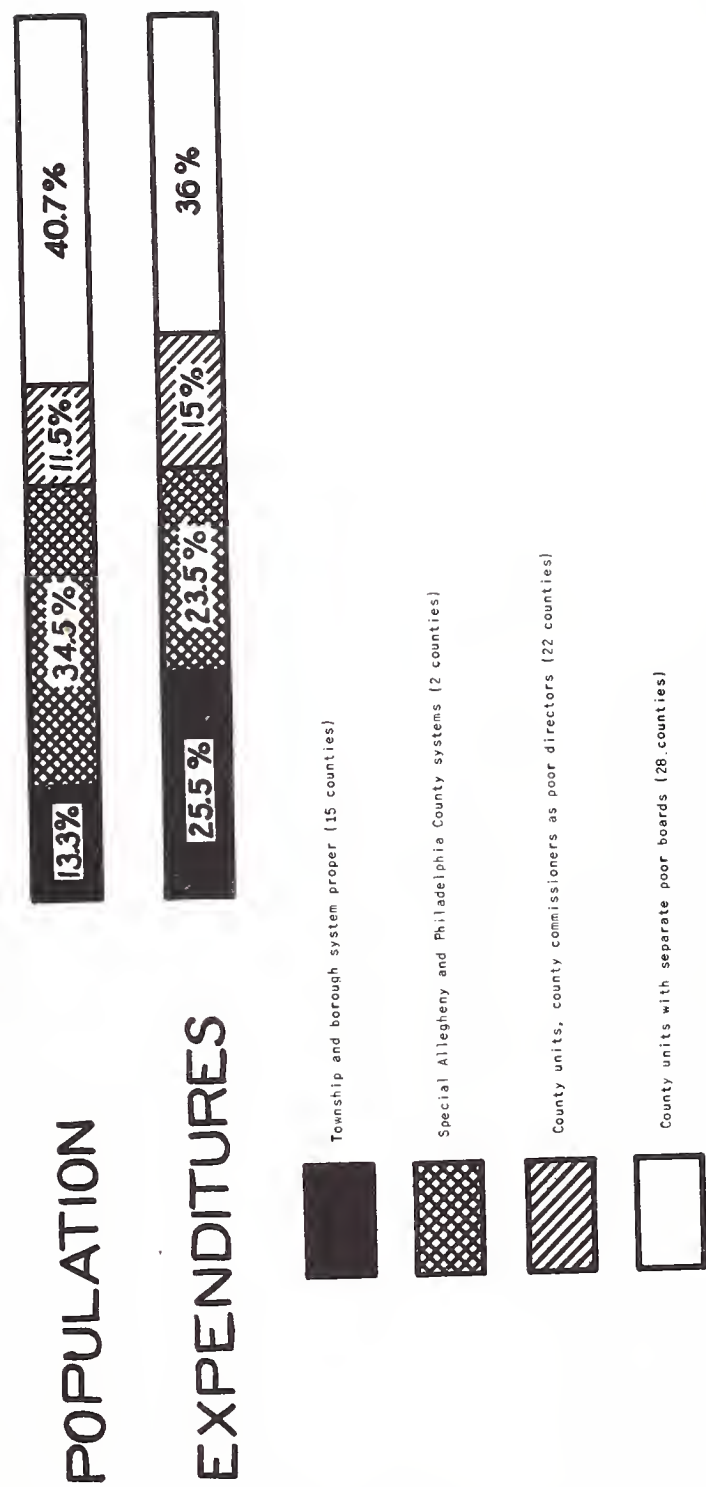
<sup>(a)</sup> Estimated on the basis of the percentage of state and federal funds available during 1933.

one-eighth, 13.3 per cent, of the state's population they account for one-fourth of the total expenditures by poor boards. The two counties mentioned show 34.5 per cent of the population and only 23.5 per cent of such expenditures, while for the county units there is little difference in the two percentages, as Chart II illustrates. Comparing poor board expenditures with population in terms of per capita cost reveals the township and borough counties averaging \$2.93 per person as compared with \$1.35 in county units with separate directors of the poor, approximately twice the figure for the state as a whole or for any other form of organization (Table 5). Two factors contributing to this cost appear to be the higher administrative cost in small districts and the larger proportion of "extraordinary expenditures" such as loan repayments and capital expenses, as shown in Table 7.

Of the total \$25,297,721 expended for welfare and relief in 1933 from local tax funds, only 42.1 per cent was expended by the poor boards as compared with 57.9 per cent by the county governments, again indicating the secondary role of the boards in the total welfare picture (Table 6). In counties under the township and borough system, and in county units where the commissioners act as directors of

CHART II  
 Distribution of Total State Population and Total Expenditures of  
 Poor Boards According to Type of Poor Relief Organization  
 1933\*

(Each bar represents 100 per cent)



\*Adapted from *Poor Relief Administration in Pennsylvania*, p. 55.

the poor, four-fifths of the total expenditures come from poor funds. In most county units with separate poor boards the division is an arbitrary matter of accounting, since the poor fund represents an appropriation from the general fund rather than a separate tax. The figures indicate that under the township and borough system the county government tends to limit relief expenditures to those mandatory upon it, leaving most of the burden to local poor districts.

TABLE 5

AVERAGE PER CAPITA WELFARE AND RELIEF EXPENDITURES <sup>(a)</sup> BY  
POOR DISTRICTS AND COUNTY GOVERNMENTS IN COUNTIES HAVING  
VARIOUS TYPES OF POOR RELIEF ORGANIZATION  
1933

Type of Organization	No. of Counties	Total Population	Expenditures by:			
			Poor Districts		Poor Districts and County Governments Combined	
			Amount	Per Capita	Amount	Per Capita
County units with separate directors of the poor	28	3,922,356	\$5,280,069	\$1.35	\$8,253,354	\$2.10
County units with county commissioners as poor boards	22	1,103,785	2,202,898	1.99	2,656,403	2.41
Township and borough system	15	1,279,338	3,748,161	2.93	4,692,897	3.67
Allegheny County	1	1,374,410	2,087,837	1.52	3,485,635	2.54
Philadelphia County	1	1,950,961	1,349,881	.69	6,209,432 <sup>(b)</sup>	3.18
Total	67	9,631,350	\$14,668,846	\$1.52	\$25,297,721	\$2.62

<sup>(a)</sup> Obtained by dividing total population into total expenditures.

<sup>(b)</sup> Including amount expended by city council through city departments other than the Department of Public Welfare.

TABLE 6

TOTAL WELFARE AND RELIEF EXPENDITURES BY COUNTY GOVERNMENTS AND POOR DISTRICTS IN  
COUNTIES HAVING VARIOUS TYPES OF POOR RELIEF ORGANIZATION, WITH PER CENT  
DISBURSED BY EACH  
1933

Type of Organization	No. of Counties	Expenditures by				Total
		County Governments		Poor Districts		
		Amount	Per Cent	Amount	Per Cent	
County units with separate poor directors	28	\$ 2,973,285	36.0	\$ 5,280,069	64.0	\$ 8,253,354
County units with county commissioners as poor directors	22	453,505	17.3	2,172,897 <sup>(a)</sup>	82.7	2,626,402
Township and borough system	15	944,736	20.1	3,748,161	79.9	4,692,897
Allegheny County	1	1,397,798	40.1	2,087,837	59.9	3,485,635
Philadelphia County	1	4,859,551 <sup>(b)</sup>	78.3	1,349,881	21.7	6,209,432
Total	67	\$10,628,875	57.9	\$14,668,846	42.1	\$25,297,721

<sup>(a)</sup> Expenditures shown in audit reports under "poor account" or "almshouse account" are treated as poor board expenditures.

<sup>(b)</sup> Expended by City Council through city departments other than the Department of Public Welfare.



Care of the indigent insane in state institutions, for example, involves under an act of 1929 mandatory expenditure from local funds of \$3.00 per week per person, "chargeable to the county or poor district from which such person shall have come." 1/ Where poor districts are subdivisions of a county, they usually bear all the cost except in the case of the criminally insane.

### Classified Expenditures by Poor Boards

Poor board disbursements in 1933 for almshouse and other relief, administration, and extraordinary expenditures in county units and township and borough districts, with the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh Departments of Public Welfare segregated because of their special character, are given in Table 7. 2/ The category of "relief: other than almshouse" includes home or outdoor relief to families and single persons, care of dependent children and of adults boarded out, institutional care for the mentally ill and defective, and medical service including support of persons in hospitals. "Outside" is the term used to denote all current expenditures outside the almshouse, and is to be distinguished from outdoor relief. "Almshouse maintenance" refers to maintenance of inmates and represents primarily food and clothing. The operation item includes running expenses for the physical equipment, such as light and heat; interest on long term loans, and farm salaries. All other salaries are included under administration.

Thus far in the discussion county audits have been the chief source of data on expenditures. Table 7 is based, however, on annual reports by the boards to the State Department of Welfare except that published audits were used for the county units and for six other large districts operating mental hospitals. The conclusions on administrative and other costs are thus based on data officially submitted by the poor boards, although many reports showed ambiguities and inconsistencies. Total poor board expenditures shown in Table 7, based on annual reports, amount to \$13,351,460.81 as compared with \$14,668,846 in Tables 3-6, based on county audits. Discrepancies arise in several instances out of omission from the reports of mental hospital

---

1/ 1929, April 25, P.L. 707, Sec. 1.

2/ For data on individual counties, see Table 26, Appendix A.

**TABLE 7**  
**POOR RELIEF EXPENDITURES, INCLUDING EXTRAORDINARY EXPENDITURES**  
**BY TYPE OF POOR DISTRICT**

1933

Expenditure	Type of Poor District						Total	
	County Units		Township, Borough, City and Mixed Districts		Philadelphia and Pittsburgh City Departments of Welfare			
	Amount	Per Cent	Amount	Per Cent	Amount	Per Cent	Amount	Per Cent
Poor relief:								
Other than almshouse	\$4,581,724.79	62.6	\$2,449,775.49	50.7	\$ 527,502.29	43.7	\$ 7,559,002.57	56.6
Almshouse maintenance	548,620.68	7.5	264,013.53	5.5	196,566.02	16.3	1,009,200.23	7.6
Almshouse operation	745,251.70	10.2	439,598.61	9.1	103,925.18	8.6	1,288,775.49	9.6
Total	5,875,597.17	80.3	3,153,387.63	65.3	827,993.49	68.6	9,856,978.29	73.8
Administration:								
Outside and almshouse	971,151.99	13.3	864,030.49	17.9	378,051.86	31.3	2,214,234.34	16.6
Total current expenditures	6,846,749.16	93.6	4,017,418.12	83.2	1,206,045.35	99.9	12,070,212.63	90.4
Extraordinary expenditures	467,045.53	6.4	813,391.84	16.8	810.81	.1	1,281,248.18	9.6
Grand total	\$7,313,794.69	100.0	\$4,830,809.96	100.0	\$1,206,856.16	100.0	\$13,351,460.81	100.0
Per cent	54.8		36.2		9.0		100.0	

expenditures or large extraordinary expenditures such as interest and payments on loans, and inclusion in the audits of expenditures made independently of poor boards by county commissioners. In other cases the discrepancies appear in identical items such as outdoor relief or salaries and remain unexplained.

Relief constitutes 65.3 per cent of total disbursements in the township and borough districts, compared with 80.3 per cent in county units, while if only current expenditures are considered the respective percentages are 78.6 and 85.7. There is no great difference in the proportion spent on maintenance of the indigent in almshouses, although 47 county units and only 35 of the other 373 districts, aside from the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh municipal districts, operate almshouses. Administration cost and extraordinary expenditures reveal significant differences. The two municipal districts referred to operate large almshouses and give little outdoor relief, therefore showing a relatively high percentage for maintenance in almshouse. Their high figure for administration is partially explained by the relative importance of almshouse care with its greater administrative cost, and by the employment of a staff for special services such as the extensive program for dependent children in Philadelphia.

#### Expenditures for Administration

Administrative cost is a major issue with friends and foes of the township and borough system. The former praise free service by unpaid directors as cheaper and better than that of high-salaried social workers or investigators, while the latter charge the existing cost is too high aside from any question of quality of service. Their annual reports to the State Department of Welfare list administrative items amounting to 13.3 per cent of total disbursements in the county units as compared with 17.9 per cent under the township and borough system, excluding as stated the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh municipal departments. Of current expenditures only, administration constitutes 16.1 per cent and 21.5 per cent respectively. The relatively higher cost in township and borough districts is greater than appears on the face of the figures, since for most county units, but few other districts, they include salaries of poor directors. Caution is necessary in interpret-

ing the figures, since the definition of administrative expense is not entirely uniform and since comparatively high "administration" cost may be a sign of emphasis on social service as contrasted with indiscriminate relief-giving. As the later discussion of relief practices shows, however, service rendered to the indigent is with some exceptions inferior in the township and borough districts. Their lower case-loads and the duplication of many administrative items accounts in part for the higher cost.

These costs are not strictly comparable with those of agencies providing home relief only, since the 85 poor districts maintaining almshouses are affected by the necessarily greater administrative cost of institutional care. For the Pennsylvania Mothers' Assistance Fund the cost of administration is limited by law to 10 per cent and was in fact 7.7 per cent in 1933; 3/ while the legal maximum for old age assistance 4/ and pensions for the blind 5/ is 6 per cent. These three services are administered by unpaid county boards. The State Emergency Relief Board reported an administrative cost of 6.2 per cent for the twelve months ending August 31, 1934, and 2.9 per cent for the preceding 12 months. 6/

One factor in the higher administrative cost in township and borough districts, for those maintaining almshouses, is the comparatively small institutions with accompanying uneconomical administration, a topic discussed more fully in Chapter VI. Certain other factors involving payment to poor directors, auditors and employees are considered here.

#### Payments to Poor Board Members

Under the Elizabethan poor law overseers of the poor were "substantial householders" appointed by justices of the peace, usually from the local gentry, and served without pay. The present Pennsylvania statutes provide no legal basis for salaries under the township and borough system except through special and local legislation. Poor di-

3/ 1919, July 10, P.L. 893. Data for 1933 from tables on file with Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, Mothers' Assistance Fund.

4/ 1934, January 18, P.L. 282.

5/ 1934, January 17, P.L. 246.

6/ *Unemployment Relief in Pennsylvania, September 1, 1932--August 31, 1934* (Harrisburg: State Emergency Relief Board, 1935), p. 35.



rectors in county units with separate poor boards receive \$100 to \$2500 per year, depending on the population of the county; 7/ where county commissioners act as poor directors additional salary is provided for in some counties but not in all. 8/ Compensation legally provided for outside the county units, in mixed and special districts, ranges from \$25 annually in the Honesdale Borough and Texas Township district, Wayne County, to \$1500 in Scranton Poor District and \$3500 in Allegheny County Poor District. In Philadelphia the Director of Public Welfare receives \$12,000; a Pittsburgh local ordinance sets the same salary as a maximum for its Director. In a few districts, by law or custom, the poor board auditors fix compensation.

The study reveals that in practice compensation is paid in many districts without legal authorization as annual or per diem salary or "according to service." Such arrangements were found to include \$1.50 per meeting plus \$1.50 for each trip; \$25 per year plus forty cents an hour for "extra work"; \$20 per year plus sixteen cents an hour for work on the poor farm. One director replied to the legal questionnaire of the study, "Salary: Not only when working 4 cents 1 hour."

In some districts additional payment is made to directors serving as officers, in accordance with statutes or otherwise. In 14 districts field workers were informed the treasurer receives a commission on total expenditures, usually 2 per cent but in one district 5, and in one district the president is paid 1 per cent commission. The treasurer for one rural township district receives whatever balance is in the treasury at the end of each fiscal year. Such payment does not encourage a high standard or low cost of administration. In one district under local laws which do not provide for payment it was for a time the practice to allow compensation to each director as officer or head of a committee. Recently this plan was discontinued and each director receives \$200 as expenses with no accounting made, although there is a question whether the statutes authorize payment of expenses either.

There is no way of telling how much time is spent by directors on their relief duties, with or without compensation. In almost no instance, except the Philadelphia and

7/ 1907, June 8, P. L. 487; 1917, May 24, P. L. 293. Exceptions: (Lancaster) 1864, April 14, P.L. 422; (Schuylkill) 1917, May 10, P.L. 179.

8/ 1917, June 7, P.L. 570; 1927, April 27, P.L. 403.



Pittsburgh Departments of Public Welfare, however, is the directorship considered a full-time job, even in the larger mixed districts with comparatively high salaries. The secretary or the treasurer is sometimes an exception, but clerical workers are usually employed if the business requires full-time work. Obviously in the smaller districts comparatively little time is spent on poor relief duties.

The legality of paying poor directors' expenses in other than county unit districts, except for the three mixed districts where specific provision is made, is questionable. Section 223 of the General Poor Relief Act of 1925 reads:

Audit of Accounts.--The directors of the poor shall keep accurate accounts of all moneys received by them in any way for the purposes of this act as well as all paid out, including such reasonable expenses as they may incur in carrying out their duties. All accounts under this act shall be audited by the county controller or county auditors, as the case may be.

The second sentence apparently refers only to county units; whether the section allows payment of expenses in township and borough districts depends on the severability of the two sentences, a point affecting more than 350 poor districts which has not yet been judicially determined. <sup>9/</sup> Expenses are paid in many districts however, with widely varying schedules of payment. Automobile mileage rates reported in the financial study, for example, range from 3 to 15 cents.

#### Compensation of Auditors and Employees

Compensation for auditors, solicitors, investigators and clerical employees are also part of the administrative cost. While an annual audit, required by law and good administration, is time-consuming, the fees paid are sometimes out of proportion to the apparent services rendered. Payment is usually per diem or per hour. In one district of 20,000 population where the law limits payment to twelve days each for three auditors at \$3.00 per day the amount actually paid in 1933 represents seventy-four days each. In another with 1933 disbursements of \$125,000 two auditors, not accountants, received \$550 each equivalent to 55 days for each at the district rate of \$5.00 per day. In a few of

<sup>9/</sup> Cf. *Poor Relief Administration in Pennsylvania*, p. 199.

the smaller districts directors audit their own accounts, without extra compensation. All large districts and a majority of the small ones employ a solicitor, usually on an annual retainer with additional fees for special duties. The study indicates this retainer is only \$5.00 or \$10.00, but when litigation between districts occurs the fees often total several hundred dollars.

Because of the method of reporting it is impossible to state the actual amounts paid in the state to auditors and employees. Some boards pay a stated annual fee to physicians, while others pay on the basis of service units (see Chapter VIII). While 19 county units employ one or more investigators, only 10 other districts, all among the 14 having a 1930 population of 25,000 or more, have such employees. The employment of trained workers for the administration of relief is specifically provided for in Section 211 of the 1925 General Poor Relief Act.

Even the smallest districts may have part-time clerical employees, and the annual reports showed for one district no disbursement for relief in 1933 along with \$25 for clerical help. The exact number of employees cannot be stated, particularly because of confusion as to full and part time in the reports, but there are at least 200 persons receiving pay in the 88 township, borough and other districts aside from county units reporting employees of some classification. Two-thirds of these districts have no employees. Qualifications are discussed in Chapter V.

#### Annual Convention Expenses

An item of administrative expense frequently criticized is the cost in some districts of the annual conventions of the Association of Directors of the Poor and Charities and Corrections of Pennsylvania. The General Poor Relief Act of 1925 (Sec. 605,606) authorizes directors to attend these conventions and provides that their actual expenses shall be paid from poor funds. It is further provided that the time spent in attending the convention shall not exceed four days. In many districts a lump appropriation is made, with no accounting required of expenses actually incurred. The great majority of small districts are not in fact represented at the conventions; fifteen counties, chiefly under township and borough organization, were unrepresented in 1933. Two examples, cited because they

are legally documented, show why the criticism arises. Certified public accountants for the 1932 Special Legislative Committee on Philadelphia independent districts reported the Germantown poor board, with nine members, allowed convention expenses as follows for the years shown:

1928 . . . . .	\$ 895
1929 . . . . .	2,613
1930 . . . . .	2,562
1931 . . . . .	950 <u>10/</u>

The amount budgeted for the 1934 convention was \$750.

The Oxford and Lower Dublin poor board paid thirteen delegates to the 1927 convention at Hazelton \$200 each, and four delegates to Erie the preceding year \$300 each. For the 1928 convention in Philadelphia itself, a total of \$800 was appropriated. The auditors further reported:

It is interesting to note that at the meeting of the directors held on August 20, 1931, when a resolution was adopted authorizing the expenditure of \$2,000.00 for the annual convention, a resolution was also passed authorizing the treasurer to hold up the payment of the bill received from the Norristown State Hospital until sufficient funds were available to pay same. It seems inconsistent to spend \$2,000.00 for a convention when they were unable to meet payment of current expenses, and had bank loans of \$45,000.00 owing at this date. 11/

#### Almshouse and Outdoor Relief Expenditures

The classified expenditures of Pennsylvania poor districts as given in their annual reports to the State Department of Welfare for 1923 and the depression years 1930-1933 inclusive, shown in Table 8, indicate certain trends in almshouse and outdoor relief expenditures. The table includes all districts, except a single small one prior to 1933; but the 1923 figures may not be strictly comparable since they probably include some mental hospital expenses. Aggregate expenditures almost doubled in the decade after 1923, with 1933 showing a 24.7 per cent increase over 1930. Outdoor relief, constituting part of the items classified

<sup>10/</sup> *Report of Committee of House of Representatives Appointed to Investigate the Special Poor Districts of the City of Philadelphia* (Harrisburg, Appendix to the Legislative Journal, 1933), pp. 7302, 7303.

<sup>11/</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7363.

TABLE 8

COMPARATIVE CLASSIFIED EXPENDITURES BY POOR BOARD  
1923 and 1930-1933 Inclusive

	Almshouse Expenditures		Outdoor Relief Expenditures		All Other Current Expenditures		Extraordinary Expenditures		Total
	Amount	Per Cent	Amount	Per Cent	Amount	Per Cent	Amount	Per Cent	
1923	\$3,167,380	46.4	\$1,101,372	16.4	\$1,956,427	28.4	\$ 598,464	8.8	\$ 6,823,643
1930	4,273,602	39.9	2,885,689	26.9	2,974,594	27.8	577,078	5.4	10,710,963
1931	3,471,959	27.8	5,270,167	42.2	3,217,439	25.8	524,078	4.2	12,483,643
1932	3,207,187	24.0	5,678,520	42.6	3,653,993	27.4	800,748	6.0	13,340,448
1933	3,300,116	24.7	4,504,184	33.7	4,265,913	32.0	1,281,248	9.6	13,351,461

in Table 7 as "Relief: other than almshouse," reached a peak in 1932 nearly five times the 1923 figure, increasing from 16.4 to 42.6 per cent of total expenditures. The decline in 1933 reflects the entrance of the state into unemployment relief, beginning with the First Talbot Fund of 1932 (not included in the table), and use of state and federal funds under the State Emergency Relief Administration after September 1, 1932. Almshouse expenditures in 1933, on the other hand, were practically at the 1923 level and had declined between 1930 and 1933 by 22.8 per cent in amount, and from 39.9 to 24.7 per cent of total poor board disbursements. This decline was in the face of a 24 per cent increase in number of inmates after 1930 (see Chapter VI).

Outdoor relief expenditures are further analyzed, by type of poor district, in Table 9 showing the number of individuals receiving such relief and per capita expenditure, based on the poor boards' annual report for 1933 to the State Department of Welfare. The two metropolitan departments of public welfare and the sixteen other city and mixed districts are segregated, since they show significant differences from the general run of township and borough districts. The Allegheny County Poor District is excluded. Its annual report showed 283,046 individuals receiving relief, which would equal 43.3 per cent of the entire Pennsylvania case load in a district with approximately 7 per cent of the state population in 1930, and a per capita expenditure of only \$2.71 for the year. Upon inquiry it appeared that this total included an unknown number of inactive cases and Allegheny County Emergency Relief Board cases receiving supplementary relief only. A revised report for the poor relief study as of March 1, 1934, gave a



TABLE 9

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING OUTDOOR RELIEF AND TOTAL  
AND PER CAPITA OUTDOOR RELIEF EXPENDITURES  
BY TYPE OF POOR DISTRICT

Excluding Allegheny County Poor District<sup>(a)</sup>

1933

	Individuals		Expenditures		Per Capita Expendi- tures
	Number	Per Cent	Amount	Per Cent	
County units - 50	259,653	70.0	\$2,593,826	69.4	\$ 9.99
Township and borough districts - 357	36,894	10.0	516,737	13.5	14.01
City and mixed dis- tricts - 16	71,782	19.4	590,754	15.8	8.23
Philadelphia and Pitts- burgh Departments of Public Welfare - 2	2,375	.6	35,930	1.3	15.13
Total	370,704	100.0	\$3,737,347	100.0	\$10.09

(a) Annual report to State Department of Welfare for 1933 showed 283,046 individuals receiving \$766,837 or \$2.71 per capita; revised report for poor relief study as of March 1, 1934, showed 10,855 cases instead of 53,541.

total of 10,855 cases as contrasted with 53,541 in the annual report.

The 16 city and mixed districts spent only about 14 per cent more than the 357 other township and borough districts, although the number of individuals is about double, and the per capita expenditure is \$8.23 as compared with \$14.01 in the townships and boroughs. Since the study of outdoor relief administration shows no significant difference among these districts in the amount of usual or maximum weekly relief grants, the explanation of the difference appears to lie in a higher proportion of more or less permanent relief cases in the latter group.



## Chapter IV

### Financial Administration

#### Summary

A separate poor tax is the source of poor district revenue in all districts except 26 county units in which the county commissioners make an appropriation from the general tax. Increased rates of poor tax levy since the depression, accompanied by a decrease in percentage collected but an increase in actual amount of collections, are the rule.

Financial administration in township and borough districts is characterized by laxity in record-keeping, bonding of individuals handling funds, and auditing of accounts, and an almost complete absence of budgeting. The larger districts, county units and others, naturally have higher standards of practice.

Poor board income in township and borough districts comes almost entirely from a special poor tax, discussed in this chapter together with other aspects of local financial administration such as financial record-keeping, methods of issuing outdoor relief and forms given, and safeguarding of funds through bonding of officials and annual audits. Miscellaneous income is received from payment by relatives or by other poor districts for care of the indigent, the sale of poor farm produce in some districts operating almshouse farms, and occasionally bequests for the poor, including some for special purposes such as fuel. By statute certain fines and penalties accrue to the poor funds as stated in Chapter II, but the study found no evidence that this is current practice. Twenty-six county units had no separate poor tax levy at the time of the study, the poor fund arising from appropriations by the county commissioners from the general fund.

---

#### Levy and Collection of Poor Taxes

The maximum poor tax levy set at ten mills by the Act of 1834 1/ remains the general law, with exceptions in a

1/ 1834, April 15, P.L. 509.

few districts. Among the Philadelphia independent districts, Germantown has no legal maximum, while the limit is 5 mills in Bristol poor district and 7 1/2 in the Oxford and Lower Dublin district. The levy requires by law approval of two justices of the peace in Bristol and four in the latter district, although there is no such office in the territory. The requirement of such approval in the Act of 1834 for township and borough districts has not been repealed, but has become ineffective in practice. The latest county assessment at the time of the levy is the basis of taxation.

Poor tax millage shows a general increase since 1930. In 1933 the township and borough district rates ranged from zero to the ten mills which is the legal maximum. 2/ Despite the depression and the greatly increased number of families receiving relief during this period, 6 of the 50 county units and 24 of the 375 other districts in the state maintained the same poor tax rates from 1928 to 1932, and 26 additional township and borough districts made no tax levy at all from 1929 to 1932, inclusive. In one county unit and 10 other districts the millage had actually decreased since 1929.

While returns to the Department of Internal Affairs for 1933 were not complete at the time of this study, in 4 of the 42 county units and 15 of the 308 other districts reported the millage stayed at the 1928 figure. The 1933 reports showed 24 of the 308 plus one county unit having the maximum 10-mill rate, as compared with 2 county units and 27 other districts according to complete 1932 returns. One borough levied 12 mills in 1929, 1930 and 1931, dropping to the legal 10 for 1932 and to 8 for 1933.

Theoretically the millage is based on an estimate of need for the coming year, which implies a detailed budget used throughout the year to control expenditures. The maintenance of a 1928 rate unchanged through the depression years means either that the levy was higher than necessary in 1928 or that the rate was not increased to meet the depression relief load. Actual decreases in some districts indicate even more strongly that rates are not always based on need. In fact, the study showed that in several districts the customary rate, rather than changing needs, de-

---

2/ The millage for each district, 1928-1933 inclusive, is on file with the State Department of Welfare.

termines the budget. In one instance all relief except medical care was discontinued in March, 1934, leaving the burden to the County Emergency Relief Board, rather than increase the rate from the customary 6 mills, although  $7\frac{1}{2}$  is allowed by law in this district.

The percentage of poor tax levies collected, however, has fallen steadily since 1928, as with other taxes, until in 1932, the latest year for which complete reports were available, the average poor board found it necessary to make the levy 50 per cent higher than the actual expenditures to be met. In other words, an average of 67.9 per cent of the levy was collected in that year. The increased rates produced a greater sum actually collected in each year since 1928, with a constant increase in the proportion poor taxes represent of total tax collections. These are the outstanding conclusions from a study of tax reports made to the Department of Internal Affairs.

Between 1928 and 1932 the per cent of poor tax levies collected dropped from 78.5 to 67.9, as shown in Table 10. Lackawanna County, under township and borough organization, collected only 39.0 per cent in 1932, which means the levy was two and one-half times the amount made available for poor relief. In general, collections were higher in rural counties, but there appears to be no significant difference between county units and the others. In 1928 the poor taxes collected were 2.4 per cent of all taxes collected. The percentage increased with each succeeding year to 3.8 per cent in 1932, with higher increases in 1931 and 1932 due to the increase in poor tax collections while total collections declined. 3/

Although some districts have special poor tax collectors, it is usual to find the regular collector collecting them at a commission of 2 per cent in the larger districts and 5 in the smaller, including most of the townships and boroughs; the range for commissions is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 6 per cent. In many districts a higher commission amounting to 5 per cent or more, in one district 10, is paid for collection of delinquent poor taxes. Deliberate delay in collection to secure the higher commission has been charged in a few instances. The Bristol and the Germantown Poor Districts in Philadelphia pay collectors a flat salary. The latter re-

3/ Cf. *Poor Relief Administration in Pennsylvania*, Appendix Table 1, pp. 220-31.

TABLE 10

TOTAL OF POOR TAX LEVIES AND  
PER CENT COLLECTED DURING CURRENT YEAR  
1928-1932

Year	Poor Taxes Levied	Current Taxes Collected	Per Cent Collections are of Levies	
			Range	Average
1928	\$5,862,630	\$4,446,218	52.5-94.2	78.5
1929	6,362,245	4,417,622	40.6-93.7	77.3
1930	6,541,805	4,628,838	34.4-94.4	75.7
1931	6,609,745	4,727,020	39.7-93.8	71.2
1932	9,461,096	6,465,162	39.0-91.4	67.9

Note: Table includes only those counties having actual poor tax levy. There were 39 counties in this group in 1928-30, 40 in 1931, and 41 in 1932.

ported that daily deposits into a special fund are made by the collector and later checked with the day's duplicate receipts by the board, and withdrawals from this account may be made only on the signature of three officers. Such thoroughgoing protection against possible irregularities, unique in the districts studied, was instituted after discovery of peculations to the amount of \$6800 by a former collector, who stated the funds went to his ward leader. <sup>4/</sup>

### Financial Records

In the expenditure of fourteen million dollars good practice in private business requires accurate accounting by qualified persons, preferably bonded, and an audit by disinterested outsiders. Those in charge of public funds may properly be asked by the taxpayer to follow similar principles.

As part of the state-wide study of poor relief administration in Pennsylvania an intensive field study by qualified persons, several of them certified public accountants, was made in 19 county units and 115 other representative districts, including Allegheny County Poor District and the Pittsburgh Department of Public Welfare, distributed as shown in Table 1. They include 55 per cent of the State's population and disbursed 60 per cent of the total

<sup>4/</sup> Report of Committee....to Investigate the Special Poor Districts of.... Philadelphia, p. 7323.



1933 poor board expenditures. While an attempt was made to select districts providing a representative sample as to size and records, the proportion of larger districts is greater than in the state as a whole. The study indicates that this fact produces some bias in the results, since greater expenditure is likely to mean better records. The schedule used is summarized in Appendix B. Field work was supplemented by a questionnaire mailed to all districts, and by information secured in the study of outdoor relief administration. The county audits previously referred to and the Auditor General's reports on poor boards' expenditure of the First Talbot Fund for unemployment relief, discussed in Chapter X, provided additional data. The general conclusion is that poor board records fall short of good standards for public accounting and in many cases provide no clear statement of expenditures and their distribution.

The first step in an ideal system of handling public moneys is budgetary procedure, the definite planning of expenditures and a regular check of disbursements against this plan. Many districts make a more or less detailed estimate of expenditures as a basis for each year's tax levy, and later ignore it, while a number of the districts consider the tax rate fixed and cut relief to fit. Definite use of a budget as a control of expenditures throughout the year was found in 6 of the 19 county units and only 9 of the 115 other districts, with 3 not reported; 13 county units and 94 other districts definitely reported no budgetary system used. The statutes governing poor relief do not require a budget, and many directors feel the amount of expenditure in a small district does not warrant the trouble involved. In those districts which do use it, however, its value is not questioned. With or without a budgetary procedure the current financial status of a poor district can be known only if properly classified records of receipts and disbursements are kept. The General Poor Relief Act of 1925 provides in Section 223 that:

The directors of the poor shall keep accurate accounts of all moneys received by them in any way for the purposes of this act as well as all paid out, including such reasonable expenses as they may incur in carrying out their duties.....

This obviously does not require a uniform system of accounting and certainly no such uniform system exists among Pennsylvania's poor districts, as their annual reports to



the State Department of Welfare attest. The present study indicates the words of the Poor Law Commission of 1890 are still applicable: "In the greater part of the State accounts are kept and audited without any respect to the true principles of the law." 5/

In analyzing the 134 districts studied, a district was considered to have good records if the directors kept a cash receipt and disbursement record, a minute book to record financial transactions in board meetings, a record of orders issued to recipients of relief, and a voucher register with a detailed classification of expenditures. Twelve of the county units and 16 other districts met these qualifications. Six county units and 9 others were rated as "fair," lacking a detailed classification of expenditures. Only one county unit, compared with 90 of the 114 other districts, maintained records of lower standard. Eighty were reported as keeping only a memorandum, 8 no record except a check book, and 2 no records at all. That the standard of financial records is much better in the county units is obvious; and among the other districts good records were met with more often in the larger ones. In one case a director had to telephone the bank before he could tell the field worker the amount of the district's bank balance; in another the director kept the poor funds with his personal account and could not separate the two; while in a third the wife of a recently deceased director against whom irregularities had been charged proffered the poor account check book, constituting the sole record, after tearing out all except blank stubs. The only record in one rural district consisted of invoices on a hook behind the stove in a director's country store. In one of the oldest districts the record was kept in a cash book used continuously since 1754; while the director in a neighboring district had a similar book dating from the same period, but since 1932 had made the original entries in a pocket memorandum for transferral to the cash book in order to preserve the historic document. Many published audits consist of lists of names of persons receiving relief, with amounts of monthly orders but no classification of accounts.

Preservation of records is essential for intelligent administration and consistent policy. A director may know all about the families to whom he allows relief, but that knowledge is of little use to later administrations if not

recorded. While the majority of the districts studied do preserve their records, the township and borough districts again appear at a disadvantage compared to the county units: 17 of the 19 counties preserve their records as compared with 73, or only 55 per cent, of the other districts. In several districts directors refused to turn over to successors a cash book considered personal property. At the time of the 1932 Legislative Committee investigation of Philadelphia independent poor districts, relief orders were burned at the end of each month in the Oxford and Lower Dublin district, 6/ a practice not being followed at the time of the present study. At the other extreme are the districts cited above, and the Germantown district, which the field workers were informed, possesses the financial records of 130 years. The extent to which records are preserved is strikingly shown by the fact that 77 of the 114 districts were unable to state the number of cases under care in the years 1928-1933.

#### Method of Issuing Relief

For the benefit of succeeding administrations, if not to lessen the possibility of abuses, the advantages of written orders in issuing relief are obvious. All of the county units studied use written rather than verbal orders for relief; 4 give cash relief, by check, as well. Of the other districts three-fifths (78) use written orders, 19 give relief on verbal order, and 11 give cash only.

The schedules on administration of outdoor relief obtained for the entire 50 county units and for 252 other districts, including all but 14 of those where the financial study was made, afford a similar comparison. Orders are used for giving food in four-fifths of the districts studied, and in three-fifths of them for clothing. The form of order ranges from telephone calls to the store, to printed and numbered forms with stubs checked at monthly board meetings, as in the Germantown (Philadelphia) district. The printed order may specify a list of groceries to which the recipient is limited, or carry a warning to the merchant that it is not to be used for luxuries; it may name a particular merchant, or be valid at any store. A few provide for an itemized list of items furnished, by a check list on the order or otherwise, while many boards require

---

6/ *Op. cit.*, p. 7339.

no itemized list in any form. In a few cases, also, the order includes a statement of the reason for relief, either as a way of making relief distasteful or as an invitation to the grocer to volunteer information on the case.

There is often wide variation in the prices charged a poor board for similar items. For example, auditors for the legislative committee which investigated the Philadelphia poor boards in 1932 found butter prices ranging from 36 to 60 cents per pound in February of that year in the Germantown district while advertised chain store prices were 30 to 35 cents. 7/ Prices paid for certain staple groceries in the Roxborough district were reported as 8 to 250 per cent higher than advertised chain store prices. 8/ In few districts, if any, does the invoice state the quality of goods purchased so that accurate comparison of prices can be made. No investigation of prices was attempted in connection with this study. The interviewer was informed by the boards above cited that at the present time there is informal comparison of prices with market rates, and in the case of the Germantown district competitive bids on coal. Poor boards rarely secure a discount from merchants. In one case where the discount secured amounted to 40 per cent, relief orders were filled at the regular market price, and the poor board billed that amount minus the discount; the relief recipients receive none of the benefit.

Regardless of price differentials, it appears that some boards limit orders to a few merchants or issue the majority of orders to a few. The legislative committee referred to went into this question thoroughly and presented detailed evidence. One merchant received a high proportion of all orders in both the Germantown and the Bristol poor districts. 9/ The president of the latter board explained to the committee, and likewise to the poor relief study field worker in 1934, that merchants who made no request were not named on the orders. 10/ At the time of the study it was stated that most orders in the Germantown district were on two local low-price chains. In Roxborough district (Philadelphia), having a population of 26,000, the interviewer was told that orders were issued by telephone to a single merchant, the only one who had been willing to extend credit to the poor board when it was temporarily unable to meet its bills monthly. The common policy of is-

7/ *Ibid.*, p. 7301

8/ *Ibid.*, p. 7320

9/ *Ibid.*, p. 7301

10/ *Ibid.*, p. 7336

suing orders on local merchants rather than national chain stores is defended on the ground that the former are local citizens and taxpayers and it is only fair to use local tax funds in the district. It should not be inferred that selection of particular merchants or variation in prices paid is confined to the districts here mentioned; while, as stated, no detailed study was made on this point, reports indicate such practices are common. The instances cited are merely a few documented cases. The indications from the study are that there is no significant difference between the practice of county units and other districts in this respect.

The General Poor Relief Act specifically forbids directors of the poor to have any financial interest in firms filling relief orders (Sec. 602). While no specific investigation was made six cases came to the attention of field workers, including one where the two directors were the owner of the store which filled most of the relief orders and a clerk in the same store. In another district a director stated that he sold to the poor fund potatoes which he himself raised. While such instances do not necessarily involve dishonesty, the practice is open to serious objection on other grounds than its illegality.

#### Forms of Outdoor Relief Given

The actual issuance of relief, as distinguished from the type of order used, may be in cash, by order, in kind, or a combination of any of these methods in the same district. As shown in Table 11, although the reporting on this point is not entirely accurate, eleven of the township and borough districts studied give cash only. Considering food, clothing and fuel, the most common forms of relief, to the exclusion of others discussed in Chapter VII, the schedules show that 24 of these districts give food only: 22 only on order, and the other 2 only in kind. Both food and clothing are given in 188 districts on order only, in 19 only in kind, in 15 by cash and order, in 2 by cash and in kind and in 11 by all three methods.

While as stated, 11 districts give cash relief only, 36 or 15 per cent give cash relief on occasion, as compared with 42 per cent of the county units. In several districts, relief is issued on order or in kind for temporary relief,



TABLE II

## METHOD OF GRANTING FOOD AND CLOTHING

Method of Granting Relief	County Units		Other Districts		All Districts	
	No. of Districts	Per Cent (a)	No. of Districts	Per Cent	Total No. of Districts	Per Cent
Cash only	-	-	11	4.6	11	3.8
Order only	24	-	167	69.3	191	65.6
In kind only	5	-	22	9.1	27	9.3
Cash and order	15	-	15	6.2	30	10.3
Cash and in kind	-	-	2	.8	2	.7
Cash, order and in kind	6	-	11	4.6	17	5.8
Not reported	-	-	13	5.4	13	4.5
Total	50	-	241	100.0	291	100.0
No outdoor relief reported	-	-	9		9	
Grand total	50		250		300	

(a) Percentages not computed, due to small number of cases.

N.B. Philadelphia Department of Public Welfare; Cash, order and in kind;  
Pittsburgh Department of Public Welfare: No food or clothing granted.



and in cash for permanent relief. The latter means usually the aged or permanently incapacitated case, and customarily relief once given continues until death or removal from the district. Where this practice is followed, it is often necessary for the applicant to secure a justice of the peace order or make a written application signed by witnesses. The recipient in some cases is required to deed to the poor board any real property owned or give a lien on such property in order to receive permanent relief. The General Poor Relief Act of 1925, Sec. 1000, provides that:

The real and personal estate of any pauper shall be liable for the expenses of his support, maintenance, and burial incurred by any poor district whether owned at the time such expenses were incurred or acquired thereafter.

What has been said with regard to food orders appears to apply as well to clothing orders, although there is less definite information. Fuel is usually provided on order. Relief in kind is found most commonly in the case of food, clothing and shoes, and is more frequent in county units than the other districts. Occasionally coal, and in at least one rural district wood, is given in kind.

#### Bonding of Custodians of Poor Funds

That the custodians of public funds should be bonded is an accepted principle of good administration, and in Pennsylvania the law provides that in the township and borough poor districts the office of any overseer of the poor shall be declared vacant if within one month after election he fails to furnish bond for double the probable amount of tax collections. 11/ In the districts studied, however, officials in less than two-thirds of the 115 township and borough districts as compared with 14 of the 19 county units were found to be bonded.

#### Annual Audits

A check on the accuracy of accounts and the legality of expenditures is provided, under approved systems of public accounting, through an annual audit made by qualified and disinterested persons. The General Poor Relief Act of

11/ 1860, March 16, P. L. 174.

1925 (Sec. 223, 1400) requires in county unit districts an annual audit by the county controller or auditor. In the other districts the municipal (township or borough) auditors usually serve, with a variety of general and special acts providing for elected or appointed auditors, in certain districts and as stated in the previous chapter setting time limits and rates of pay in some instances. The statutes say nothing, however, as to the type of reports to be prepared or the qualifications of persons making the audit. In practice, as the present study found, the audit varies from the mere notation "OK" over the auditor's signature in the poor board cash book to a published report with clearly classified expenditures and a balance sheet. More often the report consists of an unclassified list of names and amounts giving the taxpayer no clear picture of the uses made of his money. In many instances auditors have drawn attention to irregularities or to high administration costs. In a few of the smaller districts they have gone so far as to attempt, sometimes successfully, to dictate actual grants to particular families. Although the law provides that audits shall be filed within ten days of completion, 12/ a check in October, 1934, showed that outside the county units only one-third of the districts (129) had filed their audit reports for 1933.

The general picture revealed by the study is thus, with some outstanding exceptions, one of inadequate records and poor financial methods in the township and borough districts as compared with county units, and with the larger districts as a rule making a better showing than the small.

12/ 1911, June 19, P.L. 1052.

## Chapter V

### Local Organization and Personnel

#### Summary

In 348 township and borough districts the statutes provide for the election of two directors of the poor; the number in the 27 remaining districts other than county units ranges from one to thirteen; while each county unit has three, except Lancaster with six. The total provided for is 967, of which 814 are outside the county units, but practice and statutes do not agree in some districts.

Information as to welfare experience and private occupations of poor directors indicates a lack of any special qualifications for constructive dealing with cases of dependency which is even greater in township and borough districts than in county units. One township and borough director in ten holds other public office, including five in posts legally incompatible with that of poor director.

The study indicates little difference in attitude toward their duties between the two groups of directors: about two-fifths considered it their primary duty to give as little relief as possible in order to keep the tax rate down; a large majority do not consider restoration of dependents to self-support as part of their function; many favored establishment of county welfare units to relieve them of duties felt to be onerous.

Two-thirds of the township and borough districts studied have no salaried employes, but many even of the smallest employ part-time clerical workers. Politics and kinship are usually important in the selection of employes of all types, who as a rule lack other special qualifications for their position. Only 10 of the 14 township and borough districts with a population over 25,000 employ investigators; less than one-third of the investigators, in county units as well as other districts, have social welfare experience or training. Most directors interviewed considered trained workers an unwarranted extravagance.

---

Under the township and borough system citizens of a

typical poor district elect two overseers of the poor, who will carry on the business of poor relief without other assistance than part-time clerical help, if that. The township or borough auditor makes the annual audit; a local attorney acts as solicitor with a nominal retainer. The directors, and the employees if any, do not have any special qualifications, other than political and taxpayer status, for constructive work with dependents.

### Number and Selection of Poor Directors

Members of poor boards may be appointed or elected, and bear various titles. In all but 27 of the 375 districts other than county units the law provides for the election of two overseers of the poor. <sup>1/</sup> The General Poor Relief Act of 1925 (Sec. 10b) designates "directors" as the general term, and that usage is followed here. Three of the Philadelphia independent districts retain vestiges of the "house of employment" stage of poor relief, with directors officially entitled "Managers for the Relief and Employment of the Poor" in Germantown, "Guardians for the Relief and Employment of the Poor" in Bristol, and "Directors of the Poor and of the House of Employment" in the Oxford and Lower Dublin district. In some small districts the term "poor master" lingers in popular usage. In 13 districts the legal number is three, while others under special laws have four, five, six, seven, eight, nine or, in the Lakeview mixed district, Lackawanna, thirteen. Such numbers usually represent one for each municipality in a mixed district. The Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Sunbury municipal or city districts each have one director of public welfare. County units have three each, except Lancaster with six, and are elected except in Erie County.

The statutes therefore provide for 153 directors in the county units and 814 in the other districts, making a total of 967. In practice there are variations from this figure, however. Among the 252 districts other than county units covered by the social study 38 vacancies were found, including 4 in districts where the law provides for two directors but only one is customarily elected. On the other hand, 4 townships or boroughs in Lackawanna County elected three although the law provides for two. Another township, after having a single director for twenty years, changed to

<sup>1/</sup> 1903, P.L. 246.



TABLE 12  
NUMBER OF POOR RELIEF ADMINISTRATORS PROVIDED BY LAW  
425 DISTRICTS<sup>(a)</sup>

Number of Directors	County Units		Other Districts		Total			
	Districts	Directors	Districts	Directors	Districts		Directors	
					No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
1	-	-	1	1	1	.2	1	.1
2	-	-	348	696	348	82.5	696	72.4
3	49	147	14	42	63	14.7	189	19.3
4	-	-	1	4	1	.2	4	.4
5	-	-	2	10	2	.5	10	1.0
6	1	6	1	6	2	.5	12	1.3
7	-	-	1	7	1	.2	7	.7
8	-	-	3	24	3	.8	24	2.5
9	-	-	1	9	1	.2	9	.9
10 or over <sup>(b)</sup>	-	-	1	13	1	.2	13	1.4
TOTAL	50	153	373	811	423	100.0	965	100.0

(a) Philadelphia and Pittsburgh municipal districts are not included in the table proper, each has one Director of Public Welfare.

(b) Lakeview Poor District: 13 directors.

two in 1933. A number of variations from the four-year term provided by the general act governing townships and boroughs, or from special laws in certain districts, were found. In the Jermyn Borough poor district, Lackawanna County, where the general law specifying election applies, overseers are actually appointed by the president judge because only one and one-half of the borough's three wards are in the district and election district boundaries differ from poor district lines. In Washingtonville Borough, Montour County, the borough council acts as poor board under a special law.

#### Qualifications of Poor Directors

With exceptions in some of the larger districts, township and borough poor directors receive nominal salaries or none. It is argued on the one hand that as a result politics is eliminated since only the unusually public-spirited citizen will accept the thankless task, and on the other that the office goes by default to those not qualified. Light is shed on this point by the facts as to occupation, training, and attitude toward the work reported to field workers in the social study.

The duty of poor directors as stated in Section 900 of the General Poor Relief Act of 1925 is "to provide....for



every poor person within the district having a settlement therein who shall apply to them for relief where such directors are satisfied upon investigation that such relief is necessary." This does not make mandatory the adjustment of the individual or family which social case work involves, or any attempt to restore dependents to self-support, but there is no law against such preventive and constructive work and a few directors do make efforts in this direction. The position of poor director does, however, call for qualifications that will enable him to determine the need for relief and to meet it. In view of the personal problems involved welfare experience or training would obviously be an aid to efficient performance of the poor director's duties. No director in the 302 districts studied had social work training. Of 518 directors in township and borough districts for whom the information was recorded, 511 had no social welfare experience of any kind; one is executive director of a small neighborhood relief agency, and 6 are board members or otherwise connected with private agencies, County Emergency Relief Boards, or both. Appointment to the county boards is in some cases due to the official position held. It is correct to say, then, that practically none of the directors has any sort of social welfare experience.

Another indication of the qualifications of directors is given by their private occupations. The occupations reported are given in Table 13, with those pursued by less than 10 directors appearing in the supplement to the table. In township and borough districts, as in the county units, nearly one-third of the directors are farmers. Housekeepers come next in order of frequency in both groups, indicating that about 6 per cent of the county unit directors and 4 per cent of the others are women. Those occupations shown in the table proper, covering about half the total, indicate in a general way that more of the directors in the county units follow occupations requiring some education than in the other districts. For example, all the unskilled laborers and the miners appear in the township and borough districts. While these facts do not warrant exact conclusions, it would appear that many of the directors, in the smaller districts especially, follow occupations which fail to indicate any special qualification for dealing with the complicated human problems of dependency. The situation is an index of public opinion rather than a reflection on the poor directors, most of whom are doing their con-

TABLE 13  
PRIVATE OCCUPATION OF EACH POOR DIRECTOR IN 302 DISTRICTS<sup>(a)</sup>  
COVERED BY PERSONNEL STUDY

Occupations	County Units		Other Districts		Total	
	No. of Directors	Per Cent	No. of Directors	Per Cent	No. of Directors	Per Cent
Farmer	44	28.8	179	31.5	223	30.9
Housewife	9	5.9	21	3.7	30	4.1
Merchant	6	3.9	16	2.8	22	3.0
Miner	-	-	17	3.0	17	2.4
Laborer(unskilled)	-	-	15	2.6	15	2.1
Lumberman	4	2.6	9	1.6	13	1.8
Insurance Agent	1	.6	10	1.7	11	1.5
All others <sup>(b)</sup>	42	27.5	165	29.0	207	28.7
Unemployed	2	1.3	6	1.1	8	1.1
Not reported	45	29.4	93	16.3	138	19.1
Vacancies	-	-	38	6.7	38	5.3
Total	153	100.0	569	100.0	722	100.0

(a) The Directorship of Public Welfare in both Philadelphia and Pittsburgh is a full time position, hence no private occupation is listed for the incumbents.

(b) This table lists only those occupations which were reported by ten or more directors. For occupations of the remaining 207 see Supplement to Table 13 on following page.

scientific best. For one extreme instance, there is the statement to the interviewer by one duly elected township director acting as secretary in his district: "I'm now seventy years of age and, so far as I can remember, only attended grade school for several years. My memory is poor, I'm blind in one eye, a cripple, hard of hearing, and I'm a very busy man during the summer months with all the farm work to do."

### Other Official Duties

In the township and borough districts studied more than 10 per cent of the directors held some other public office. Thirteen party committeemen were reported, which is probably much lower than the actual number considering the frequent connection of politics with choice of directors and the fact that the specific question was not asked in all districts. Three were members of boards of health and 2 borough councilmen (besides 7 in Washingtonville Borough, Montour County, who serve ex officio), both offices which are legally prohibited to poor directors. <sup>2/</sup> There were 10 members of boards of education, one of whom was also a road supervisor and another a township tax collector, and 6 justices of the peace. Others were road supervisors, constables, tax assessors, auditors, and members of County Emergency Relief Boards, with one each of the following: county commissioner, burgess, borough treasurer and County Emergency Relief Board member, election official, jury com-

<sup>2/</sup> 1874, May 15; P.L. 186.

### Supplement to Table 13

The 207 directors of the poor whose occupations are not specified in Table 13 fall into 123 different classifications, with from 1 to 7 in each,

The occupations were reported as follows:

Advertising manager	Finisher and glazier	Pharmacist	Truck driver
Almshouse steward	Fire warden, state forest	Physician	Undertaker
Architect	Florist	Pipe fitter	Upholsterer
Auditor	Freight clerk	Plumber	Welfare workers, American
Baker	Garage man	Poultry man	Red Cross
Banker	Gardener	Preacher	Woodworker
Barber	Gas station worker,	Peddler	
Beer distributor	Grain dealer	Railroad worker	Dual Occupations
Blacksmith	Grocer	Railroad fireman	Barber and merchant
Bookkeeper	Hide buyer	Railroad foreman	Coal dealer and pool room
Brewer	Hotel keeper	Railroad (unskilled laborer)	owner
Bridge foreman	Huckster	Railroad trainman	Farmer and butcher
Business (not otherwise specified)	Janitor	Real estate	Farmer and carpenter
Business executive	Junk dealer	Restaurant owner	Farmer and florist
Butcher	Justice of the Peace	Road or street repair foreman	Farmer and school bus driver
Cabinetmaker	Laundryman	Roller in rolling mill	Farmer and state road worker
Camp helper	Lawyer	Salesman	Farmer and pool room owner
Car builder	Machinist	School bus driver	Gas station and state road worker
Carpenter	Machinist's helper	School principal	Insurance agent and clerk
Carpet weaver	Mail carrier	Secretary	Insurance agent and lumberman
Cemetery caretaker	Manufacturer	Sheet metal worker	Junk dealer and truant officer
CERB (executive director)	Mason	Shoemaker	Laborer (unskilled) and carpenter
Chair finisher	Mechanic	Silk mill superintendent	Plumber and state employee
Chauffeur	Metallurgist	Skilled laborer	(not otherwise specified)
Chopping mill owner	Miller	State employee	Truck driver and railroad trainman
CWA worker	Mill worker (wood)	State mercantile appraiser	Undertaker and grocer
Claim agent	Mine foreman	State road worker	Upholsterer and bookkeeper
Clerk	Mine union organizer	Station agent	Welfare worker, Red Cross, and executive, family welfare agency
Coal dealer	Mine watchman	Steel worker	
Coal operator	Molder	Telephone lineman	
Contractor	Motorman	Trackman	
Electrician	Nurse	Truant officer	
Engineer	Odd jobs		
	Painter		

missioner, and township tax collector. In the county units only 3, excluding the 66 county commissioners who serve ex officio had other official duties: 2 members of boards of education and 1 tax assessor. One of these was also a burgess.

### Poor Directors' View of Their Duties

A poor director's conception of his duties gives some indication of his qualifications for the work and the type of service given. Field workers were asked to report, in the directors' own words where possible, the answers to the question, "What is the opinion of each director as to the nature and extent of his duties and responsibilities as a director of the poor?" About two-fifths of the replies, in county units as well as in the other districts, were to the effect that the director considered it his or her primary duty to give as little relief as possible in order to keep the tax rate down. Nearly the same proportion in the county units, and one-quarter of the other directors, stated their primary aim was to help the poor to the best of their ability. In the township and borough districts a number stated simply that their responsibility was to carry out the duties of their office as prescribed by law. The remainder expressed a variety of miscellaneous opinions, including liking or dislike for the job, a feeling that a more experienced colleague should do the work, and recognition of the prestige attached to the position.

A number of directors explained that they accepted the positions only under protest, and some were in office because other individuals had refused to accept. In one rural township three appointments by the county court produced a net result of one functioning director. It is therefore not surprising that several directors expressed a desire for county welfare boards which would relieve the local poor boards of their onerous duties. The majority consider the giving of relief, after weeding out the impostors, as their sole responsibility, without investigation as to the causes of dependency or efforts to restore families to self-support. On the other hand, as shown in Chapter VII, some directors do make an effort to carry on constructive work with dependent families. These are the exception rather than the rule.



These statements of opinion must of course be interpreted with caution, since they necessarily involve an element of the field worker's judgment, and on the other hand may represent a director's public statement rather than his actual practice. The general impression given is that the individuals represented in these statements are conscientiously endeavoring to perform their duties and that the chief duty is conceived to be to give as little relief as possible at least as often as to provide adequate assistance to the poor.

### Selection of Employees

In the selection of employees considerations of politics and kinship play a large part, as indicated by the statements of the directors themselves and the number of instances found where relatives of directors were on the pay roll. In one district the salaried executive came to the position from a purely political appointment at the request of the local party leader, with previous experience as skilled mechanic; he had served earlier as poor director in the district. In one township, until recently a director signed orders for relief as justice of the peace, for which he received a fee, to himself as poor director, and paid himself as secretary to keep the poor board accounts and as auditor to audit his own books: surely the quintessence of nepotism. These are of course exceptional cases, and inefficient service is not necessarily involved. The evidence is clear, however, that in many districts ability to do the work required is not the chief consideration in picking employees.

### Relief Investigators

Although the General Poor Relief Act of 1925 specifically permits employment of trained welfare workers (Sec. 211) only 16 of the 61 investigators in districts other than county units, including 27 in Allegheny County Poor District, were reported as having experience with other public or private welfare agencies, and 9 as having had special training courses. Among the 27 investigators in county units, 10 had experience in other agencies but only 1 had taken special courses.



In view of the emphasis placed by many directors on keeping relief grants as low as possible it is not surprising that social case work training is not always sought, and that the highest praise was expressed in two districts in the words, "He's as good as a detective." One investigator parked his car at a different street corner each morning at six: any client seen leaving home with a package was denied further relief, without other investigation, on the ground that he had a job as indicated by his carrying lunch to work. In employing an investigator another board made lack of social work training or experience a chief qualification, since it was believed a social worker would "try to tell the directors how to run their business" and be harder to train in the accustomed methods. While prevention of fraud is of course very important, constructive service to the needy, if it is to be given, calls for additional qualifications.

#### Other Employes

It has long been an American truism that almshouse employes are not generally of high caliber and as Chapter VII shows the study found Pennsylvania not unusual in this respect. The discussion of financial records suggests that bookkeepers in many districts are not highly qualified. A rating by the study staff, based on replies reported by field representatives for the financial section of the study to the schedule question, "Qualifications of persons keeping accounts? What training and experience?" indicates that while three-fourths of the county units studied had qualified bookkeepers, the proportion was reversed in the other districts: in only 26 of the 115 was the person in charge of the accounts considered to have adequate training and experience for the work. The condition of the accounts kept as well as special experience or training was taken into consideration. In most of these districts where qualifications were lacking, the directors themselves kept the records. The small district typical of the township and borough system can perhaps not be expected to attain high accounting standards. In one township from which Department of Welfare communications had brought no reply the study field representative was shown a cigar box of these letters with the apologetic comment that the director "could not make head nor tail of them." From another district came the following letter to the Department:

Question No. 13, I may not have clear meaning.

Does poor district have a sinking fund?

I ans. yes for poor district has a debt of \$690.00

Applying the same general basis to auditors that was used for bookkeepers shows them reported as qualified in 11 of the 115 districts as compared with 10 of the 15 county units for which this information is available. Here also qualification varies with size of district as a general rule. The auditors are of course not employees of the poor board in the sense that the bookkeepers are.

Some solicitors, particularly in districts under local laws, are authorities with years of experience; in others the appointment is given the local lawyers in rotation. That not all the solicitors are thoroughly familiar with the poor laws is not surprising, considering the confusion and number of the statutes. In one district the directors, seeking relief from the financial burden of fees to justices of the peace for administering the "pauper's oath" were told by their solicitor that they had no recourse, nine years after the 1925 General Poor Relief Act specifically prohibited the granting of orders by justices. In general the compensation does not warrant the time necessary to master the intricacy of the present statutory provisions.

In summary, it is fair to say that the present poor directors are not qualified to give expert social service, or, it is indicated by the test of private occupations and their statements as to the nature of their task, to administer "adequate means of subsistence" in an efficient manner. Paid investigators are usually inexperienced and untrained. Both clerical workers and almshouse employees for the most part lack the qualifications for efficient service in their respective fields. Solicitors in the smaller districts, especially, do not find it possible to familiarize themselves with the special and intricate problems of the many poor laws. On the whole the showing is better in the larger districts than in townships or boroughs.

## Chapter VI

### The Almshouse

#### Summary

The small size of the township and borough almshouse is the key to its special characteristics and problems. More than 300 township and borough districts provide no almshouse care, while 38 of Pennsylvania's 85 almshouses are outside the county units. Six of the larger districts maintain mental hospitals in connection with the almshouse, as do 6 of the 47 county units which have almshouses. The average daily population in 1933 was one hundred or more, considered the minimum for efficient institutional management, in only 10 of the 38, and was less than twenty-five in 23 of them, including 2 without inmates. Among the county units 12 of the 47 fell below one hundred, and only 3 below fifty in average population.

Almshouse inmates in Pennsylvania increased 84 per cent from 1923 to 1933 while almshouse expenditures increased only 4 per cent. In the absence of a real admission policy the turnover is high; old age is the most common reason reported for admission, and four-fifths of the inmates are over fifty years of age. Men outnumber women about three to one.

The development of old age assistance is expected rather to reduce future admissions of the able-bodied aged than to take the present inmates from the institution. Provision elsewhere for the feeble-minded, the unemployed and the transient, now important groups in the almshouses, leaves more and more the chronically ill and infirm as the predominant group, suggesting the need for hospital facilities, on a regional basis, to replace the small almshouse without proper facilities for this class of patient.

---

The characteristics and problems of the township and borough district almshouse as compared with others are essentially those of the small institution as compared with the larger one. As background for discussion of these special problems, trends for the State as a whole in almshouse

population, expenditures, inmates and types of service are considered. The data are drawn from annual reports by the poor districts to the Department of Welfare, material gathered by the staff of the poor relief study, and reports by field workers of the Department of Welfare, which is granted the right of inspection by the General Poor Relief Act of 1925 (Sec. 224).

In various localities "poorhouse," "county home," "home for the destitute," "poor farm" or "county farm," and "infirmary" are used to designate the basic public institution for relief of the poor, for which "almshouse" is a general term. For some of the larger institutions, "county hospital" might be added to the list. The New Jersey Department of Institutions and Agencies uses "welfare house" for the newer type of institution designed to care for the aged and infirm.

The usage here is that of the General Poor Relief Act of 1925, which in Section 10d defines "almshouse" as "..... the county home, poorhouse, home for the destitute, or any other building or place, by whatever title designated, where poor persons are maintained at public expense."

#### Number of Almshouses and Average Population

The approximate location of the 85 almshouses in Pennsylvania is shown by the map on the following page, with the number of inmates in each on December 1, 1933. Thirty-eight of these are outside the county units; more than 300 township and borough districts, including all those in Cameron, Fulton, Juniata, Snyder and Union Counties, provide no almshouse care. Among the county units Pike, Sullivan and Wyoming Counties have no almshouses. Six of the county units and 6 large city or mixed districts conduct mental hospitals, almost half the cost of which is borne by the state, in connection with their almshouses: Allegheny County Poor District; Pittsburgh Department of Public Welfare; Blakely Poor District, Scranton Poor District (Lackawanna County); Jenkins Township, Pittston City and Pittston Township Poor District (Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties); Central Poor District (Luzerne County). Philadelphia's city-owned mental hospital at Byberry is conducted by the Department of Public Health.



deducted from Poor Relief Administration in Pennsylvania, p. 122.



The 38 almshouses, with location and 1933 average daily population of each (total days' care divided by 365) are listed below. One other borough, which made no almshouse report to the State Department of Welfare, had purchased residence property and placed four families therein. Such an arrangement would appear to come within the definition by the General Poor Relief Act cited above.

## LIST OF ALMSHOUSES

<u>County and District</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Average Daily Population</u>
<b>Allegheny</b>		
Allegheny Co. Poor District	Mayview	1,391
Pittsburgh Dept. of Public Welfare	Woodville	1,789
<b>Carbon</b>		
Middle Coal Field Poor District	Weatherly	335
<b>Centre</b>		
Bellefonte Borough	Bellefonte	4
Boggs Township	Milesburg	5
Milesburg Borough	Milesburg	10
Philipsburg Borough	Philipsburg	5
Rush Township	Philipsburg	6
Spring Township	Axeman	7
Union Township	Fleming	1
<b>Columbia</b>		
Bloom Poor District	Bloomsburg	20
Centralia Borough and Conyngham Township	Centralia	9
<b>Lackawanna</b>		
Blakely Poor District	Olyphant	126
Carbondale City	Carbondale	31
Jenkins Township, Pittston City and Pittston Township Poor District	Ransom	124
Lakeview Poor District	Clarks Summit	30
Scranton Poor District	Clarks Summit	315
<b>Luzerne</b>		
Central Poor District	Retreat	646
<b>Lycoming</b>		
Williamsport City	Williamsport	83
<b>Montour</b>		
Danville-Mahoning Poor District	Danville	20
Valley Township	Mausvale	0

<u>County and District</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Average Daily Population</u>
Northumberland		
Milton Borough	Milton	15
Mount Carmel Borough	Reed Station (Crowl P.O.)	42
Northumberland Borough	Northumberland	3
Shamokin & Coal Township		
Poor District	Shamokin	111
Sunbury City	Sunbury	14
Watsontown Borough	Watsontown	5
Zerbe Township	Trevorton	4
Philadelphia		
Germantown Poor District	Germantown	127
Oxford & Lower Dublin Poor District	Holmesburg	95
Roxborough Poor District	Shawmont	17
Philadelphia Department of Public Welfare	Holmesburg	1,879
Susquehanna		
Auburn & Rush Township Poor District	Montrose	5
Forest City Borough	Forest City	0
Montrose Borough	Montrose	1
New Milford Township	New Milford	8
Susquehanna Depot & Oakland Township Poor District	Susquehanna	0
Wayne		
Honesdale Borough and Texas Township Poor District	Honesdale	11

These 38 almshouses had a combined daily average population for 1933 of 7,203, which is 44.1 per cent of the state total of 16,317. Excluding the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh municipal institutions and the Allegheny County almshouse, which are the three largest in Pennsylvania, the combined population is 2,144 or 13.1 per cent of the state total, while the median for the 35 almshouses is only 10. The small size of township and borough almshouses appears also in Table 14, showing the number of institutions with given daily average population. Authorities on institutional management consider one hundred beds the minimum for efficient and economical service. <sup>1/</sup> Only 10 of the 38 almshouses outside county units maintained an average of

1/ E.g., *Philadelphia Hospital and Health Survey* (Philadelphia Hospital and Health Survey Committee, 1929), p. 564.

TABLE 14  
NUMBER OF ALMSHOUSES MAINTAINING CLASSIFIED AVERAGE DAILY NUMBERS  
OF INMATES

1933

Average No. of Inmates Maintained <sup>(a)</sup>	Number of Almshouses		
	County Units	Other Districts	Total
None reported	-	2	2
Less than 25	2	21	23
25 but under 50	1	3	4
50 but under 100	9	2	11
100 but under 250	22	4	26
250 but under 500	12	2	14
500 and over	1	4	5
Total	47	38	85

(a) Total number of days' care in almshouses, exclusive of local mental hospitals, divided by 365.

one hundred or more inmates, while among the county units only 12 of 47 fall below this figure. In fact two-thirds of the township and borough almshouses had an average population under twenty-five in 1933, including 2 with total days' care representing less than half a year for a single person. Since the 10 above the one hundred mark are in the city or large mixed districts rather than in townships and boroughs proper, it is fair to say that almshouse problems raised by the township and borough system are those of small institutions as compared with larger ones. These problems should be considered in the light of the general almshouse situation in Pennsylvania.

#### Trends in Almshouse Population and Expenditures

The total number of inmates in Pennsylvania almshouses on December 31, 1933, is 85 per cent greater than the number on the same date in 1923, being 16,317 as compared with 8,840. The total expenditures for the year 1933 were only 4 per cent higher than those for 1923, however, as is shown in Chart III, based on Table 15. Logically this apparent reduction in costs may result from either greater efficiency in almshouse management or from lowered standards of care. Making all possible allowance for the former, the figures still indicate lowered standards, particularly since the expenditures rise with population until 1930 and actually decline during the depression. This conclusion is further

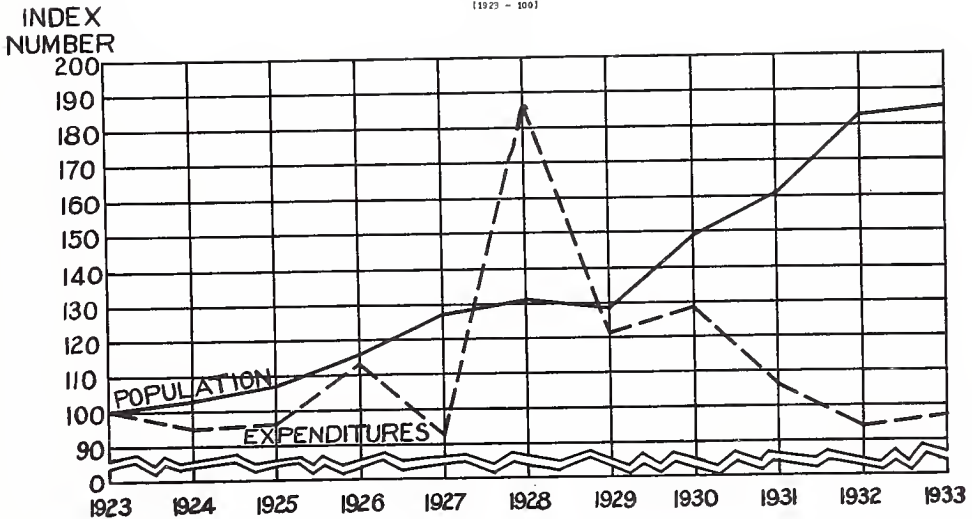
TABLE 15

ALMSHOUSE POPULATION ON DECEMBER 31 OF EACH YEAR  
AND ALMSHOUSE EXPENDITURES DURING EACH YEAR  
1923-1933 INCLUSIVE

	Population on December 31	Index Number	Expenditures during year	Index Number
1923	8,840	100.0	\$3,765,844.08	100.0
1924	9,060	102.5	3,574,510.23	94.9
1925	9,481	107.3	3,625,512.56	96.3
1926	10,241	115.8	4,271,824.03	113.4
1927	11,184	126.5	3,496,859.58	92.9
1928	11,516	130.8	7,043,889.74	187.0
1929	11,368	128.6	4,549,875.28	120.8
1930	13,149	148.7	4,850,679.82	128.8
1931	14,160	160.2	3,996,037.31	106.1
1932	16,122	182.4	3,535,396.97	93.9
1933	16,317	184.6	3,650,189.34	96.9

CHART III

Alms-house Population on December 31 of Each Year and Total  
Alms-house Expenditures During Each Year  
1923-1933 Inclusive\*  
[1923 = 100]



\*Data from Table 15.

borne out by Department of Welfare staff reports and by the specific items in almshouse expenditures. The amount paid for food increased only 1.5 per cent to meet the 85 per cent increase in population, while expenditures for food and light, furniture, bedding and linen, ordinary repairs, clothing and shoes for inmates all show an actual decrease. 2/

A trend towards larger almshouses over this period also appears. The number of institutions supporting a daily average of less than one hundred inmates was 62 of the total 86 in 1923, as compared with 40 in 1933, while the number maintaining more than one hundred increased from 24 to 45. In terms of aggregate average daily population the change is more striking, from 26.1 per cent in the smaller institutions in 1923 to 7.4 per cent in 1933. Centre county nevertheless still had in 1933 seven almshouses with a combined average population of 43.

The increasing proportion of aged and infirm persons in the almshouses is another change particularly affecting the smaller institutions, because the infirmary type of care required cannot be economically provided except in a relatively large institution. From the catch-all which was the almshouse in the days of Dickens' "David Copperfield" and in the seventies when public officials and social workers seriously debated the abolition of outdoor relief there have been taken in turn, by provision of special care, the children, the insane, and the feeble-minded, the blind and the deaf, and to a lesser degree the epileptic and the able-bodied unemployed. The almshouses still shelter many individuals of these classes, of course, including in Pennsylvania on December 31, 1933, a total of 175 children. Individuals over fifty years of age constituted on that date three-quarters, and those over seventy nearly one-third, of all persons in the 45 almshouses for which the information is available. These 45, using the record forms supplied by the Department of Welfare, included 75.8 per cent of the total almshouse population. 3/ Men outnumber women about four to one in the group over fifty, and three to one if all ages are included.

A study to determine the needs for institutional care in Lycoming County, made by the Department of Welfare at

2/ Cf. *Poor Relief Administration in Pennsylvania*, Table A-5, p. 125.

3/ *Ibid.*, Table A-8, p. 136.



the request of the county commissioners in 1934, gives concrete evidence of the necessity for infirmary care. Despite an eight-to-five majority for the county unit plan of poor relief in a 1929 referendum, the county still has fifty-two poor districts, of which only the city of Williamsport has an almshouse. The results of the study are thus stated:

"....Our analysis shows that there are in Lycoming County 291 cases which presumably fall within the category of institutional care. There are nearly twice as many men as women; for the most part they are aged; they are in general without marital ties, although there are some disabled married couples; one-third are mentally incapacitated and two-thirds suffer from serious physical disabilities, more than half have several disabilities; one-fourth will need medical treatment constantly, 16 per cent will need nursing service at all times, and probably all of them will need both services at certain times. A little over one-third can help to a certain extent in the care of the institution, the majority can at least care for themselves, but 18 per cent will need to have continual attention." 4/

The establishment of old age assistance in December, 1934, further accentuates the movement by providing for the able-bodied aged in their own homes. It is expected the result will be not so much to take present inmates out of the institutions as to reduce further admissions in the future. Despite the increasing proportions of inmates whose condition calls for infirmary care, only five almshouses in Pennsylvania have hospital facilities suitable for the care of this group. The small institutions are thus not alone in the lack of infirmary care, but such care could not be provided efficiently in these smaller almshouses if desired. The implied argument for larger poor districts is obvious.

The "swinging door" policy of indiscriminate admission and discharge is another feature common to large and small almshouses in the State. In the 45 almshouses using record forms supplied by the Department of Welfare, covering 76 per cent of the total almshouse population in 1933, one

4/ *Poor Relief in Lycoming County - An Almshouse Study* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, 1934, mimeographed) pp. 14, 15.

person in four reported previous admissions. There is usually no investigation in the social work sense before admission. Many directors, in this respect as in outdoor relief, feel that since they know their communities such investigation is unnecessary. Only 11 of the 85 institutions give a medical examination upon entrance. Leaving is as casual a matter as entering, in most districts.

### Per Capita Costs of Large and Small Institutions

Comparison of daily costs per inmate in county unit and other almshouses shows strikingly lower costs in the county units, which is to say in the larger institutions, as is shown in Table 16. Only 2 of the 47 county unit institutions have a per capita figure above \$1.00, as compared with 11 of the 36 reported in the township and borough districts. Two of the latter shown as under \$.50 had no inmates in 1933, which further strengthens the contrast. Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, with about 1800 in each institution, are in the group having the lowest cost.

These costs are not a completely reliable basis for comparison of course, since not only size of institution but also quality of service provided varies widely. What

TABLE 16

#### ALMSHOUSE DAILY PER CAPITA COSTS BY TYPE OF POOR DISTRICT

1933

Average Per Capita Cost	Type of Poor District			Total
	County Units	Township, Borough, City and Mixed Districts	Pittsburgh and Philadelphia City Departments of Welfare	
Under \$ .50	20	5	2	27
\$.50 - \$.74	19	8	-	27
.75 - .99	6	10	-	16
1.00 - 1.24	1	5	-	6
1.25 - 1.49	1	2	-	3
1.50 - 1.99	-	1	-	1
2.00 - 2.49	-	1	-	1
2.50 & over	-	2	-	2
Not reported	-	2	-	2
Total	47	36	2	85

the money buys is as important as the amount spent; but it is clear that the smaller institutions cannot provide a given grade of service as economically as the larger one. As a matter of fact some of the institutions with the highest per capita costs give the poorest grade of service. In general, the smaller institutions are well below their capacity while the largest are seriously overcrowded. Part of the explanation for higher costs in small institutions lies in the number of inmates per employee, which shows a consistent increase with size of institution. While the 85 inmates per employee of one of the largest almshouses probably reflects serious overcrowding, the median in those having a population over 500 was 30 per employee as compared with 4 for almshouses under 25 average population and 8 for those between 25 and 50. One of the smallest had 2 employees and only 1 inmate; and another with no inmates had 2 employees.

#### Personnel and Equipment

More difficult to measure are the qualifications of almshouse personnel. Generally speaking, political considerations rank high in the appointment of superintendents and other employes whether the institution is large or small. As in the case of poor district accounting, however, the mere fact of size exercises some compulsion towards qualified personnel: the larger almshouses are too conspicuous in the taxpayer's mind to appoint just anyone to run the institution. An extreme case is that where a poor director ordered a man living on occasional odd jobs and regular outdoor relief to "go up and run the poorhouse," which thereafter contained his family of eleven and seven inmates. In another instance a poor director placed a sister, reputedly feeble-minded, in charge of a small almshouse with another sister, unquestionably feeble-minded, as an inmate. In three small almshouses the so-called employes were unpaid. With a large institution attention must necessarily be given to care of the inmates and ability to run the poorhouse farm successfully cannot be the chief qualification sought in picking a steward. In the larger institution, also, the community is forced to provide medical care, which raises the personnel standards.

The equipment for care of the aged and infirm naturally cannot be provided in the abandoned hotels or old resi-

dences which are the smaller almshouses. Disregarding this type of care, the present study showed equipment to be adequate in only 17 of the 38 institutions having less than a hundred inmates. More than half, in other words, lacked refrigeration, laundry equipment, sufficient bed clothing, inside toilets, or other minimum equipment. By contrast, 31 of the 45 with over a hundred inmates had such minimum equipment. Seven of the total 10 considered in poor condition as to sanitary equipment were in the group of smaller homes. Only 5 almshouses in the State, including the largest, were found to be without serious fire hazards. The median township and borough almshouse, with ten inmates, cannot possibly measure up.

Inferior equipment and personnel in the smaller institutions make adequate service impossible. As previously stated, such service is possible, even if not always provided, in those large enough for efficient administration.

The quality of service to inmates is inseparable from considerations of personnel and equipment. It is self-evident that while adequate care, particularly for the infirm and aged, is not always provided in the larger almshouses, it cannot be provided in the smaller ones with costs already high.

The inevitable conclusion from a consideration of the present facilities and the present and future character of almshouse inmates is that county or regional institutions, largely hospitalized, must be secured if the poor authorities are to meet their responsibility for care of the poor. The township and borough system of poor relief not only fails to provide such adequate care, but makes it impossible.



## Chapter VII

### Outdoor Relief Administration

#### Summary

Township and borough poor boards compare unfavorably with the county units with respect to efficiency in the giving of material relief, which is their chief concern, or in constructive dealing with personal problems of dependents, which is not.

Division of responsibility for the granting of relief is customary, between individual directors within a district or with justices of the peace, auditors or investigators. Orders from justices are required in one-third of the districts despite specific statutory prohibition of the practice. Such orders, or consideration of the case by the entire board, are more common for permanent than for temporary relief grants.

Food, fuel, clothing and some type of medical care are given in practically all districts. The usual grant falls short of the "necessary means of subsistence" specified by law: in the districts reporting on this point, the average usual grant is \$3.50 and the maximum \$5.00 for a family of five, while for single persons the usual amount is \$1.50 and the maximum \$2.00. There is little attempt to adjust the grant to individual need. Lack of legal settlement and property ownership are the most frequent reasons for refusal of relief.

Practically no effort is made to deal with family problems, or to supervise families on relief or restore them to self-support. Only 20 of the 252 districts keep a record of cases other than name, address and amount of relief given, as compared with 26 county units. Poor boards do not cooperate with or make use of other welfare agencies, with some outstanding exceptions, except in the care of dependent children. There is no regular closing of cases in most districts; in many of them relief ceases only with death or removal from the district.

---

That the small township and borough poor district can-



not provide adequate almshouse care is readily admitted. In the case of outdoor relief, however, the claim is made that the small unit is more efficient because part-time unsalaried directors who know everyone in the community can do a better job at less cost than high-salaried trained workers in a larger district. On the whole the present study bears out the statement by the 1890 Poor Law Commission, previously referred to, that there is more maladministration in the small districts than in county units, despite the lessened possibility of fraud because poor authorities know the indigent personally and public opinion has more force in keeping individuals off the relief list. 1/

Poor board practices in administering outdoor relief suggest comparison with standards of social case work by private agencies, involving investigation (or as it is coming to be called, social study), preparation of the social history, diagnosis and planning, treatment, and recording. Since almost half the directors interviewed consider it their chief duty to give as little as possible in order to keep taxes down, as stated in Chapter V, and most of them are not concerned with that adjustment of the individual to his environment which is the aim of the social case worker, poor board methods are here considered in terms primarily of relief giving rather than case work. From this narrower viewpoint, as will appear, inefficiency characterizes outdoor relief administration in general and the township and borough districts in particular.

The constructive and preventive efforts involved in social case work might conceivably prove more economical in the long run than routine doling of relief. The present study on the whole bears out the statement of Philip Klein:

The practice of social case work by public agencies has been limited consistently by legal restrictions as to settlement, residence, the amount or type of relief to be given and types of cases which are acceptable. In American communities the client of a public agency runs the danger of becoming designated a 'public charge,' which in many cases may lead to deportation, an action always serious and sometimes catastrophic to the client. The physical aspect of public departments, the requirement that the applicant must appear and often that he must 'sign up for

---

1/ *Op.cit.*, pp. 40, 41.

the pauper list,' the policy of making budgetary provisions reach a maximum clientele, the generally untrained public service personnel, especially before the introduction of civil service reforms, have constituted further obstacles to case work standards in public agencies. In the course of time and in view of these difficulties certain compromises have been worked out between public and private agencies. Among these are the public subsidizing of private case work agencies; the designation of private agencies as agents of the public authorities either in toto or for investigation and recommendation; the division of functions assigning simpler or pension types of cases to the public body and more intensive cases to private agencies; the supplementation of public relief in specific instances on recommendation of the private agency (which, however, retains responsibility for treatment); and, especially in courts and penal or reformatory institutions, the supplying by private agencies of the necessary case work personnel, which, while thus holding quasi-public positions, is financed and controlled by private agencies. 2/

The schedules used in the study of all county units and 252 other districts on which the following discussion is based are summarized in Appendix B. The 123 townships and boroughs not included in the study contain only 1.1 per cent of the State's population. Since on the whole the larger districts appear to have higher standards of outdoor relief administration, as well as better financial records, personnel standards and almshouse care, it follows that any bias resulting from this omission is in favor of the township and borough system rather than otherwise. All reports as to practices followed come directly from statements by poor directors or their representatives in the districts studied. Poor board administration of unemployment relief under the First Talbot Act is discussed in Chapter X.

#### Size of Poor Districts and of Case Loads

Methods of administration in the township and borough districts, particularly in comparison with county units can

---

2/ "Social Case Work," *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (New York, 1934), Vol. 14, p. 181.

only be understood in the light of the size of district and the case load. Three-fifths of all districts other than county units have a population under 1000 and five-sixths under 2500 (see Table 2). Even more obvious in its effect on administration is the smaller number of cases in the typical district, as shown in Table 17. At the time of the study two-thirds of the districts other than county units studied had less than ten cases (families or single persons) receiving relief, and 79.7 per cent reported less than twenty-five cases. Nine small districts reported no relief being given during 1933. The latter group reported a total of only 923 cases, less than 5 per cent of all cases outside the county units. Only 7.4 per cent of the township and borough districts had more than 100 cases. In the county units, on the other hand, four-fifths reported 100 cases or more.

While it may be impossible to set a minimum number of cases as essential to systematic and efficient administration of relief, it is obvious that the small case load is a

TABLE 17

DISTRICTS HAVING CLASSIFIED NUMBERS  
OF OUTDOOR RELIEF CASES

March 1, 1934

302 Districts

(Philadelphia and Pittsburgh Departments of Public Welfare Included)

Number of Relief Cases	County Units				Other Districts				Total			
	Districts		Cases		Districts		Cases		Districts		Cases	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
None (a)	2	4.0			52	20.6			54	17.9		
Under 10	1	2.0	1		116	46.0	519	2.7	117	38.7	520	1.4
10--24	1	2.0	14	.1	33	33.1	404	2.1	34	11.3	418	1.1
25--49	2	4.0	77	.5	11	4.4	379	2.0	13	4.3	456	1.3
50--99	4	8.0	325	1.9	6	2.4	370	1.9	10	3.3	695	1.9
100--299	18	36.0	3170	18.6	7	2.8	1364	7.1	25	8.3	4534	12.5
300--499	10	20.0	3669	21.5	4	1.6	1516	7.8	14	4.6	5185	14.3
500--999	8	16.0	5329	31.3	2	.8	1000	5.2	*10	3.3	6329	17.4
1000--and over (b)	4	8.0	4451	26.1	3	1.2	13781	71.2	7	2.3	18232	50.1
Not reported					18	7.1			18	6.0		
Total	50	100.0	17036	100.0	252	100.0	19333	100.0	302	100.0	36369	100.0

(a) In Erie and Westmoreland, all outdoor relief cases were under CERB on March 1, 1934.

(b) Berks County, 1028; Fayette County, 1177; Franklin County, 1046; Montgomery County, 1200; Allegheny County District, 10855; Central Poor District (Luzerne County), 1199; Oxford and Lower Dublin (Philadelphia), 1727.

major explanation of the generally inefficient methods followed as discussed below. There are exceptions, of course, even in the smallest districts.

### Division of Funds and Territory

In 66 of the township and borough districts studied a division of territory or funds, or both, among the directors makes the administrative unit even smaller. The practice is more common in the county units, where directors frequently are elected to represent specific sections of the county. In 34 districts (excluding county units) each director is assigned a particular territory, while in 11 others each has not only a particular part of the district but a specific allocation of funds. Funds, but not territory, are so allocated in 21 districts. In several cases each subdistrict has a separate tax levy and in at least one instance autonomy goes so far that each district has its own director, auditor, tax levy and solicitor. In several districts it was reported that the two directors were not on speaking terms.

For the definite allocation of funds to individual directors it is difficult to see any advantages over the customary plan of general supervision by the board over the amounts expended by individual directors. Such division does tend to prevent elasticity in adjusting expenditures to needs. The division of territory may have definite advantages, however, particularly in the larger districts, in enabling the directors to know their clients and communities better, and in greater convenience for the applicants. On the other hand, it multiplies the number of inefficiently small units and leads to variation in the extent of investigation and in adequacy of relief within even a township or a borough. The expressed purpose of dividing the territory is sometimes for the inconvenience of applicants, moreover; directors are assigned a territory more or less distant from that in which they live in order to discourage applications. It is argued that an automatic needs test is provided since only those really in need will travel the necessary distance to see the director. The directors in one district stated that unless districts were assigned in this fashion home life would be impossible, and they cite the experience of a colleague who had administered the district in which he lived.



Division of Responsibility  
Between Poor Directors and Others

The ultimate legal responsibility for poor relief lies with the directors. In practice this legal authority may be divided with or challenged by other officials, particularly justices of the peace and auditors. A second division of responsibility in actual administration is between directors and employees. In a few cases the auditors have attempted to dictate to directors not only the total amount to be spent for relief, but the amount of grants in specific cases. In one instance where the poor board was caring for an aged man, a daughter who had been deserted by her husband, and her three children, the auditors undertook to force the board to discontinue relief to the mother and children since she was offered a position as housekeeper which would provide for her and two of the children. When the board refused, because the reputation of the unmarried man making the offer led them to believe the duties required might extend beyond those of housekeeper, the auditors for a time refused to approve the directors' financial report. In several cases reported, auditors have attempted to dictate the tax levy. This practice is to be distinguished from that of making recommendations to the board, which is more widespread and appears not to be open to objection.

The General Poor Relief Act of 1925 (Sec. 2h) expressly withdraws the authority of justices of the peace to grant orders for poor relief. Nothing shows more clearly the general ignorance by poor directors of the law covering their duties than the fact that justices of the peace do issue orders for relief in 89 township and borough districts representing 37 per cent of the number studied, and 5 county units (Table 18). In 41 districts, 17 per cent, such an order is regularly required for all applications. Ten districts require justice of peace orders for permanent or cash relief, 14 districts use such orders irregularly, and in 24 the circumstances are not stated. The practice is known to exist in a number of the districts for which a definite report is not available. Where orders from two justices are required, as in 21 township and borough districts, the applicant may have to go to another township to find a second justice. In several districts the signature of witnesses, up to six in number, is required. These orders usually require a fee ranging from \$.50 to \$1.50,



which may constitute a major item of expense to the poor board as well as an important source of income for the justices. In several instances the directors were grateful to the field worker on this study for showing them a way to eliminate this expense, which in at least two cases their district solicitor had said was mandatory. Where the practice survives, the effect is to take from the poor directors the responsibility for granting relief and make them practically agents of the justices without power to determine who should receive relief and without any responsibility for the investigation of cases. The practice goes back to early Pennsylvania and English poor laws.

Where legal division of responsibility is not in question there may be in practice a division of administrative responsibility between the directors and paid investigators or other employes. While it is reported in only one of the ten township and borough districts having investigators that the investigator may sign a relief order, in several of the others it is customary for directors to accept the investigator's recommendation without question. This is more frequent in county units having investigators. The practice may be justified on the ground that the director has no other basis of judgment in districts large enough to warrant the employment of investigators. In some of these

TABLE 18

DISTRICTS REQUIRING ORDER FROM JUSTICE OF THE PEACE (a)

Justice of the Peace Order Required?	County Units		Other Districts		Total	
	No. of Districts	Per Cent	No. of Districts	Per Cent	No. of Districts	Per Cent
No	45	90.0	121	50.2	166	57.0
Yes:*						
Not otherwise specified	3	6.0	24	10.0	27	9.3
From - One Justice	1	2.0	20	8.3	21	7.2
Two Justices	-	-	21	8.7	21	7.2
For permanent relief only	-	-	10	4.1	10	3.4
Irregularly	1	2.0	14	5.8	15	5.2
Not reported	-	-	31	12.9	31	10.7
Total	50	100.0	241	100.0	291	100.0
No outdoor relief	-		9		9	
Grand total	50		250		300	

(a) Philadelphia and Pittsburgh Departments of Public Welfare do not require order from Justice of the Peace.

larger districts, however, the directors do personally investigate doubtful cases. In one county unit district the responsibility for investigation and granting relief is shared with the county home steward and in another with the solicitor. No such cases are reported in the township and borough districts, but in a few relief is usually granted after consultation with the solicitor. In other cases it is the clerk in the poor board office who interviews most applicants and whose recommendation is followed.

### Application for Relief

If it is intended to discourage the request for relief by making it humiliating, there is an advantage in requiring application to be made before the entire poor board or in the presence of other applicants or the public. If service to the individual or the preservation of self-respect is a consideration, provision for privacy is essential. The study shows that in only 17 of the township and borough districts is there provision at the poor board office for private interviews. By way of contrast, 33 of the 50 county units have such provision. It does not follow, of course, that such facilities are used for all applicants.

Of course many of the township and borough districts do not have an office. In at least two-thirds of them interviews take place at the director's home, or more rarely at his place of business. How frequently this means privacy is unknown; the study would indicate that it usually does not. More frequently the director sets aside one or two evenings a week for receiving applications, and interviews take place in the living room in the presence of other applicants and often of the director's family, who may take an active part in the proceedings. In some cases the director's wife not only is present, but makes the actual decision as to relief and keeps the records, if any. This does not imply that relief administration is thereby in the hands of persons less well qualified than the directors, but it does mean that the applicant lacks privacy in the discussion of his case. Where the interview is held in the director's place of business there is even less likelihood of privacy. In a few cases interviews were reported to take place "wherever the applicant can find the director, usually on the street." In 14 districts the applicant must present his application to a meeting of the poor board, in

several cases in the presence of other applicants. This practice is also followed in 6 county unit districts. In at least 23 county units and 65 other districts names or relief recipients are published, in annual audits usually, sometimes with the avowed purpose of discouraging applications. It is clear that privacy is the exception rather than the rule under the township and borough system, with provision therefor more frequent in the county units.

Verbal application is usually sufficient with the signing of a written application, other than an order from a justice of the peace, required in only 5 of the township and borough districts, and in 2 of these only for permanent or cash relief. As stated above, justice of the peace orders are regularly required in 75 districts including 10 where the requirement holds only for permanent or cash relief. A verbal application means usually a purely informal request made to a director or some employe of the board. This request may come in a number of districts from an interested person rather than a member of the family involved.

The nature and scope of information secured at the time of application varies widely, and there is no way of measuring it. While many districts have forms for recording such information, field workers found in several instances that in practice only names, addresses and sometimes ages were entered on forms which were reasonably complete. Some districts have continued to use the cards provided for administration of the Talbot Fund by the poor boards.

### Investigation

Directors of the poor are charged by the General Poor Relief Act (Sec. 900) to give relief when "satisfied upon investigation that such relief is necessary." In general, nothing approaching a thorough case work investigation is attempted by poor boards. Poor officials are not interested so much in the treatment of human problems as in the financial status and the legal settlement of applicants. Furthermore, since being a poor director is not a full-time job in the township and borough districts, or for that matter in many of the county units, directors are unwilling to give the necessary time. Where investigators are employed, they are not trained social workers and in general they share the director's attitude toward case work.

A third factor is the belief in small districts that previous acquaintance with the applicant's circumstances is sufficient for granting relief without a complete investigation. In two-thirds of the districts studied the directors stated that previous acquaintance is sufficient, and in only one-third was it felt that any further investigation was necessary. This may be compared with the county units where the proportions were approximately reversed. There is some merit in the argument that in small communities much of the information which a stranger might secure through formal investigation is already known to the director, but even in the smallest and even for information as to finances and legal settlement something more than local gossip and general acquaintance with the individual is necessary to secure the complete facts. Regular reference calls of any sort are made in only 22 per cent of the township and borough districts. In only 15 per cent are calls regularly made on employers, banks, merchants, or other sources most likely to have specific financial information. In three of the ten larger districts employing investigators no regular calls were made. In the county units, on the other hand, about two-thirds report regular reference calls.

Another measure of the extent of investigation is the use of social service exchange. An exchange is available to 42 township and borough districts but only 8, or one in five, are reported to use it in any manner. In one of these, cases are registered with the exchange but no use is made of the information; while in another, cases are registered at the end of each month, after investigation is completed and relief granted or refused. This district is included among the 5 reported to use the exchange regularly, as is Allegheny County where, it was stated to the interviewer, the names are sent to the exchange in order to learn whether the cases are already known to the poor board. In the county units on the other hand, 13 of the 17 where an exchange is available make some use of it. As with other aspects of investigation, the difference is partly a matter of size of districts. The picture is likely to be changed with the organization of new exchanges under the leadership of the State Emergency Relief Board since the study was made.

A similar indication as to completeness of investigation is the extent to which cases are cleared with other



agencies. Four-fifths of the township and borough districts do not follow this practice, according to their reports, and where cases are cleared it is usually with the County Emergency Relief Board only. It is possible that the number clearing with other agencies is understated since information from other sources indicates that a higher proportion of districts clear with County Emergency Relief Boards and with children's agencies. It remains true, however, that such clearing is the exception and not the rule. Still another measure of investigation is given by the statement in almost two-thirds of the township and borough districts studied that no inquiry is made as to eligibility for other relief such as emergency unemployment relief, mothers' assistance, veteran's relief, or workmen's compensation.

Any investigation made is by the directors themselves in most districts, since only ten township and borough districts have paid investigators. As stated in discussing division of responsibility above, most investigation in these ten districts is carried on by the employes. In a few of these the directors take an active part in supervising the work, while in others they merely rubber-stamp the investigator's recommendation. The qualifications of directors and investigators have been discussed in Chapter V. In the districts where an order from a justice of the peace is required, no investigation is made by the justice, and none by the directors since they feel they are bound by his order.

Something of the purpose and method of investigation where carried out has been indicated. The chief aim is to check impostors and the ideal is detective work rather than social case work. With this practice may be contrasted the type of investigation in social case work which is intended to secure reasonably complete information not only as to finances but also as to family problems and background, as a basis for thorough understanding of the case and an attempt at constructive treatment of a family situation in which relief is often a temporary or minor feature.

Data concerning the basis on which poor boards determine whether relief shall be temporary or permanent or whether individuals should be placed in the almshouse or receive outdoor relief, are inconclusive, beyond demonstrating that there is in most districts no clear-cut basis.



In general, some form of physical or mental disability is reason for deciding on indoor relief; in a number of districts the primary question is which form costs less.

### Granting of Relief

In the township and borough districts the actual granting of relief, as might be expected, is by individual directors in three-fifths of the districts. In 74 districts, nearly one-third of the total, action by the board is required; while in 18 districts there was at the time of the study one director serving. In only one township and borough district is the power of granting relief shared with an employe, a paid investigator. Investigators or other employes may grant relief in 10 of the 50 county units. As noted above, the investigator's recommendation is often taken as final, although he does not sign the relief order. While figures are not available, in some instances persons not directly connected with the poor board have considerable influence in determining who receives relief. Occasionally a state nurse or children's worker acts unofficially as investigator. Occasionally, also, persons with political standing in the community may influence the decision.

What has been said applies where relief is to be given for a relatively long time. Special provision is sometimes made for granting aid to emergency cases. In 22 per cent of the township and borough districts no special provision is made, while in the others relief may be granted pending inquiry, usually by an individual director.

Methods of issuing various forms of relief and records kept of relief given have been discussed in Chapter IV. In the majority of the districts covered by the financial study records were found to be inadequate. Cash relief and orders are more likely to be recorded than relief in kind. The kinds of relief granted by various districts form a complicated picture. Food and clothing are given in most township and borough districts, as compared with 42 of the county units giving each. These figures are suggestive only, probably representing somewhat less than the actual number of districts in each case. About three-fifths pay rent. Approximately two-thirds provide fuel; almost one-third provide kerosene, but less than 4 per cent pay for

electricity. For all these kinds of relief the proportion reported is consistently lower than in the county units. Medical relief is discussed in Chapter VIII; 5.4 per cent of the township and borough districts, as compared with 12 per cent of the county units, are reported not to provide such care. Burial of the indigent is a responsibility of poor boards under the General Poor Relief Act of 1925 (Sec. 911), which limits the expense of such burial to not less than \$25 nor more than \$75. Amounts reported in the districts studied ranged from \$8 to \$85.

Transportation is paid in 43 per cent of the township and borough districts and 73 per cent of the county units. To a degree this reflects the practice of passing on cases to other districts or other states; or transportation may represent the return of a person or family to a legal settlement. Miscellaneous kinds of relief reported in isolated instances include payment of water bills and house repairs, livestock feed, coal stoves and parts, and mattresses.

These are the chief forms of relief and the proportion of districts giving them. The question of forms allowed a given family is much more complicated. It is not likely, for example, that kerosene and electricity would be allowed to the same family. Restrictions vary, as do the total kinds of relief allowed in various districts; the whole problem is too complex for discussion here.

#### Amount of Relief Granted

Under Section 901 of the General Poor Relief Act of 1925, if a poor person within a district having a settlement therein "by reason of age, disease, infirmity, or other disability, be unable to work it shall be the duty of the directors to provide him with necessary means of subsistence." It is difficult to reduce to figures the "necessary means of subsistence." These involve food, shelter, and clothing, for which minimum standards may be set up. A minimum for medical care cannot be applied to all families, and for other items the necessities are even more difficult to determine. A rough indication that not all districts do provide the necessary means is given in the discussion above of forms of relief: a district which grants neither cash nor food relief does not.

The amount of weekly relief orders provide the best available data. In the present study the usual and the maximum grant, for families of five and for single persons, were asked for in each district. Since 80 per cent of the township and borough districts had less than 25 active cases at the time of the study, it is not surprising that for usual grants in over 40 per cent of these districts, and for maximum grants in nearly 60 per cent, no definite amounts were reported (Table 19). In the 98 districts for which both usual and maximum grants were reported, the median amounts stated in weekly terms were \$3.48 and \$5.00 respectively, to be compared with \$3.50 as the usual and \$6.00 as the maximum in the county units. In one of the 98, "adequate means of subsistence" were granted at the rate of 92 cents per week for a family of five, this being both the usual and the maximum grant. At the other extreme was reported a usual grant of \$12.00 per week. No significant difference appears in the 25 county units for which both usual and maximum amounts are reported. Among the county units the lowest figure met with is \$5.00 per quarter, which amounts to \$.39 per week. The order, good for food, clothing, and other kinds of relief, is granted only after the directors are satisfied, by an interview before the entire board and frequently in the presence of other applicants, that the case is worthy.

Failure to adjust the relief grant to individual circumstances, as well as the inadequacy of the amount allowed, show clearly in this table. In one-sixth of the 98 districts, and in 3 of the 25 county units for which both usual and maximum grants are reported, the usual is the maximum: no allowance whatsoever is made for family conditions and resources, except that extraordinary expenses such as medical care and burial may be met. To the specific question whether consideration is given to family resources in granting relief, the answer was "No" in one-third of all districts studied, county units and others alike. No district was found to be using a family budget system, although 8, 3 of them county units, were using the basic allowance of the State Emergency Relief Board as a guide. This basic grant at the same period, for a family of five without income, was \$7.00 to \$8.40.

Amounts allowed single persons approach more nearly the emergency relief provisions: in 97 districts where both usual and maximum figures are available the average for the

TABLE 19

USUAL AND MAXIMUM WEEKLY GRANTS OF RELIEF TO FAMILIES OF FIVE (a)

Amount	County Units				Other Districts				Total			
	Usual		Maximum		Usual		Maximum		Usual		Maximum	
	No. of Districts	Per Cent	No. of Districts	Per Cent	No. of Districts	Per Cent	No. of Districts	Per Cent	No. of Districts	Per Cent	No. of Districts	Per Cent
Under \$1.00	1	2.0	-	-	1	.4	1	.4	2	.7	1	.3
\$ 1.00 - \$ 1.99	3	6.0	1	2.0	9	3.7	3	1.2	12	4.1	4	1.4
2.00 - 2.99	2	4.0	2	4.0	17	7.1	9	3.8	19	6.5	12	4.1
3.00 - 3.99	9	18.0	7	14.0	48	19.9	13	5.4	57	19.6	20	6.9
4.00 - 4.99	4	8.0	4	8.0	23	9.4	20	8.3	28	9.6	24	8.2
5.00 - 5.99	9	18.0	2	4.0	23	9.6	35	14.5	32	11.0	37	12.7
6.00 - 6.99	-	-	5	10.0	7	2.9	13	5.4	7	2.4	18	6.2
7.00 - 7.99	1	2.0	2	4.0	4	1.7	3	1.2	5	1.7	5	1.7
8.00 - 8.99	2	4.0	2	4.0	2	.8	2	.8	4	1.4	4	1.4
9.00 - 9.99	-	-	1	2.0	-	-	1	.4	-	-	2	.7
10.00 - 11.99	2	4.0	-	-	-	-	4	1.7	2	.7	4	1.4
12.00 and over	-	-	3	6.0	1	.4	2	.8	1	.3	5	1.7
No definite amount	7	14.0	7	14.0	43	17.8	38	15.8	50	17.2	45	15.5
Not reported	10	20.0	14	28.0	63	26.1	97	40.3	72	24.8	110	37.8
Total	50	100.0	50	100.0	241	100.0	241	100.0	291	100.0	291	100.0
No outdoor relief					9		9		9		9	
Grand total					250		250		300		300	

(a) Philadelphia Department of Public Welfare: Usual and maximum, \$5.00; outdoor relief is given only to non-resident families.  
 Pittsburgh Department of Public Welfare: Not reported; outdoor relief other than medical is given only to transient and non-resident families.

TABLE 20

USUAL AND MAXIMUM WEEKLY GRANTS OF RELIEF TO SINGLE PERSONS (a)

Amount	County Units				Other Districts				Total			
	Usual		Maximum		Usual		Maximum		Usual		Maximum	
	No. of Districts	Per Cent	No. of Districts	Per Cent	No. of Districts	Per Cent	No. of Districts	Per Cent	No. of Districts	Per Cent	No. of Districts	Per Cent
Under \$1.00	5	10.0	1	2.0	9	3.7	3	1.3	14	4.8	4	1.4
\$1.00 - 1.99	28	56.0	11	22.0	79	32.8	37	15.4	107	36.8	48	16.5
2.00 - 2.99	3	6.0	9	18.0	33	13.7	43	17.8	36	12.4	52	17.8
3.00 - 3.99	2	4.0	2	4.0	13	5.4	12	5.0	15	5.1	14	4.8
4.00 - 4.99	1	2.0	-	-	-	-	2	.8	1	.3	2	.7
5.00 - 5.99	1	2.0	1	2.0	1	.4	3	1.3	2	.7	4	1.4
6.00 and over	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	.8	-	-	2	.7
No definite amount	7	14.0	7	14.0	43	17.8	43	17.8	50	17.2	50	17.2
Not reported	3	6.0	19	38.0	63	26.2	96	39.8	66	22.7	115	39.5
Total	50	100.0	50	100.0	241	100.0	241	100.0	291	100.0	291	100.0
No outdoor relief					9		9		9		9	
Grand total					250		250		300		300	

(a) Philadelphia and Pittsburgh Departments of Public Welfare not reported.



former is \$1.50, with an average maximum of \$2.00 (Table 20). Since the data is reported for only 23 county districts the lower figures in county units--\$1.25 as median for both usual and maximum--are probably of no great significance. Here even more than with families the usual is likely to be the maximum: in one-fourth of the county units and one-third of the other districts for which usual and maximum are both reported the amount is the same.

### Reasons for Refusing Relief

The responsibility of poor authorities for granting relief has been stated. Information was also sought on the reasons, other than financial, for refusing relief to applicants. This information is incomplete and merely suggestive, but as set forth in Table 21 it does indicate the variety and to a degree the extent of these reasons. Any one or any combination of them may appear in a given district. In two districts out of five it is stated that need is the sole test, and that relief is refused for no reasons except those of income. It is possible that in these districts other reasons do enter in, in practice. Refusals to persons for whom relief is pending from other sources or who have certain types of property, might be considered as made in view of potential borrowing power. The case is not quite the same, however, as saying that relief is refused only because of income. The survival of early settlement laws and the resulting injustice to individuals and legal costs to some poor districts was discussed in Chapter II. That these laws are not enforced in all cases, despite the plea frequently heard that economy is sought in every way, is shown by the fact that only 17 per cent of the township and borough districts, and a slightly lesser proportion of the county units, are reported to refuse relief for lack of settlement in the district. The same proportion of the township and borough districts, but only 4 county units, refuse relief to transients, persons without either legal or actual residence in the districts.

The General Poor Relief Act (Sec. 1012) provides that "The husband, wife, children, father, mother, grandparents, and grandchildren respectively of every poor person shall at their own charge, being of sufficient ability, relieve and maintain such poor person at such rate as the court of quarter sessions of the county where such poor person re-

TABLE 21

NUMBER AND PER CENT OF DISTRICTS REFUSING AID FOR PARTICULAR REASONS  
OTHER THAN LACK OF FUNDS (a)

Reasons for Refusing Aid	County Units		Other Districts		Total	
	No. of Districts	Per Cent of All Districts	No. of Districts	Per Cent of All Districts	No. of Districts	Per Cent of All Districts
1. Legal responsibility lodged elsewhere:						
Non-residents	7	14.0	41	17.0	48	16.5
Persons whose relatives are legally responsible for support	3	6.0	-	-	3	1.0
2. Pending relief from other sources:						
From MAF	2	4.0	-	-	2	.7
From veterans' relief or pensions	3	6.0	3	1.2	6	2.1
3. Property disability						
a. Real property:						
Owners of real estate (unspecified)	2	4.0	29	12.0	31	10.7
Owners of real estate unencumbered	4	8.0	8	3.3	12	4.1
Owners of real estate mortgaged	-	-	3	1.2	3	1.0
Persons refusing to give lien on property	10	20.0	18	7.5	28	9.6
b. Personal property:						
Owners of radios (unspecified)	3	6.0	38	15.8	41	14.1
Owners of radios (bought after relief started)	-	-	1	.4	1	.3
Owners of automobiles (unspecified)	5	10.0	60	24.9	65	22.3
Owners of automobiles (if used)	3	6.0	7	2.9	10	3.4
Owners of automobiles (used for other than business purposes)	14	28.0	12	5.0	26	8.9
Owners of other types of personal property	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. Racial, etc.:						
Aliens	2	4.0	21	8.7	23	7.9
Negroes	-	-	2	.8	2	.7
5. Special types of social problems:						
Strikers	3	6.0	3	1.2	6	2.1
Loafers	-	-	2	.8	2	.7
Deserted families	-	-	1	.4	1	.3
Unmarried mothers	3	6.0	4	1.7	7	2.4
Transients and homeless	4	8.0	44	18.3	48	16.5
Law violators and their families	3	6.0	7	2.9	10	3.4
Immoral women	5	10.0	-	-	5	1.7
Bootleggers	1	2.0	-	-	1	.3
Drinkers	1	2.0	1	.4	2	.7

(a) Philadelphia Department of Public Welfare: Refuses aid to unmarried mothers, transients and homeless, and those waiting for veterans' relief or pensions.

Pittsburgh Department of Public Welfare: Gives only medical relief and relief to transients and non-residents.

sides shall order and direct." In only 3 of the county units and 3 of the other districts studied is legal responsibility of relatives a reason for refusing relief, however, and suits brought by poor directors to establish such responsibility are rare. One reason is that the legal expense is likely to be greater than the expected saving to the poor board.

In most districts, as stated above, particularly under the township and borough system, no inquiry is made as to eligibility for other forms of relief. The negligible number of districts where such eligibility is the occasion for refusing to grant relief bears out this finding.

Relief is refused persons owning some form of property in almost half the county units and more than one-third of the other districts, with much variation in the specific circumstances leading to refusal. Owners of real estate, encumbered or free, are refused relief in a third of the latter and in 21 of the county units, while a distinction is made in 11 districts as to whether the property is mortgaged. In view of the provision of the General Poor Relief Act (Sec. 1000) that "The real and personal estate of any pauper shall be liable for the expenses of his support, maintenance, and burial incurred by any poor district, whether owned at the time such expenses were incurred or acquired thereafter," it is interesting that only 18 districts, 7.5 per cent, deny relief to persons refusing to give a lien on real property owned, while ten county units follow this practice. This provision has sometimes been interpreted as making such a lien a mandatory prerequisite to relief. Apparently the more common attitude toward real property ownership is that of the director who remarked, "They can't eat a house." Ownership of automobiles and radios, sometimes under special conditions, is a reason for refusing relief in about one-fourth of the districts, whether county units or others. Almost one-sixth of the township and borough districts make ownership of a radio a bar to relief, as compared with only 3 of the county units. In nearly one-third of the districts automobile ownership is ground for denying relief, sometimes only if the automobile is used, or used for other than business purposes. It is a commentary on the American standard of living that, by implication, one may own an automobile and still be eligible for relief in the majority of poor districts. Comparison of Pennsylvania with poorer non-industrial states in

this respect would be interesting.

Scattered districts are reported to refuse relief to aliens and Negroes, or cases representing social problems, such as strikers; loafers, drinkers, and bootleggers; immoral women; families of law violators; unmarried mothers, and deserted families. The one general conclusion which may be drawn from the data on reasons other than lack of income for refusing relief is that as in so many other respects there is no uniformity. Whether a particular case will receive relief is largely a question of the district.

A further question in considering the refusal of relief is its finality. The decision is made in the great majority of districts, as shown in the discussion of who may grant relief, by an individual director. Appeal to the entire board is therefore theoretically possible; and legally there is in all cases recourse to the courts. Such reconsideration by the board is provided for about 90 per cent of all districts. The board usually confirms the decision of the individual director, as might be expected in the review by any such body of action by one of its members.

#### Supervision of Cases and Handling of Family Problems

The average poor director's attitude toward efforts to deal with family problems appears clearly in the report from about 60 per cent of the townships and boroughs studied, as compared with 30 per cent of the county units, that no effort is made to deal with family problems. Most of the districts having paid investigators report an attempt to deal with family problems in at least part of the cases.

An illustration of preoccupation with financial questions to the exclusion of family problems, which would appear to be typical, is that related to a field worker by the office clerk in one district. A woman receiving rent relief came into the poor board office for advice as to which of two offers of living quarters, made by men acquaintances, she should accept. The clerk's reply was, "That's none of our business; but make up your mind, because you've had your last rent check." In one of the small townships, on the other hand, a poor director found employment for the needy father of a family, learned of a



debt owed him and arranged for its payment through use of the debtor's store credit to provide necessary clothing for the family, and thus restored the family to self-support. That township reports no cases on relief.

The poor boards' supervision of families on relief through regular home visits is a more specific measure of interest in family problems. Only 9 of the township and borough districts report a systematic review of changing needs and conditions, while 18 per cent, of the county units, make such a systematic review. In about two-fifths of the former districts no supervisory home visits at all are reported, while some such visits are made in 45 county units. In both groups visits are made in all districts having investigators.

#### Cooperation with Other Agencies

Whether one's interest is in relief alone or in the broader aspects of prevention and constructive treatment, there would appear to be obvious advantages to poor boards in cooperating with other agencies in the community, at least to the extent of finding out whether an applicant is already receiving relief from these agencies. The poor boards report, however, little cooperation of any sort with other welfare agencies. As stated previously, few poor boards in districts where a social service exchange is available make use of it, particularly in township and borough districts, and few clear their cases with other agencies. In only 16 of the township and borough districts studied do the poor boards accept the investigation of any other agency, according to the reports, as compared with 40 per cent of the county units.

Referrals by the poor boards to other agencies and by other agencies to them give the same picture: no referrals in the majority of township and borough districts, some cooperation in the majority of the county units. Twenty-two of the county units but only 8 of the other districts, report supervision of some poor board relief by private agencies. In the township and borough districts more than 70 per cent report no aid whatever sought from other agencies, public or private, while in the county units three-fourths seek such aid. Some division of community relief responsibility between the poor board and social agencies is re-



ported in 80 per cent of the county units as compared with only 52 per cent of the other districts, commonly with the County Emergency Relief Board only. The import of these figures is clear: after making all due allowance for possible inaccuracies, the township and borough poor boards do not cooperate with other agencies, while cooperation along the various lines indicated is common in the county units.

### Closing of Cases and Reapplication

Staying on relief is on the whole less complicated than getting on the list. In more than half the township and borough districts reapplication is unnecessary as a general rule or, in 16 districts, for those cases recognized as on permanent relief. The proportion among county units is about the same. At the other extreme are 8 districts reported to require a new application for each kind of relief, each time a relief order is exhausted. Altogether 15 per cent, or 37 of the township and borough districts, require reapplication each time an order is exhausted; while 6 county units, a similar proportion, follow the practice. Seventeen of the former, but no county units, require separate application for each kind of relief. Where any reapplication is necessary the most common practice, however, is to require it only to reopen a case.

Since in different districts varying interpretations of closure were accepted by the officials, figures on the basis of closing cases are merely suggestive. In 31 township and borough districts it was stated that cases were never closed, and in 25 more that they were closed only upon death or removal from the district. Two county districts reported closing only upon death or removal. In some cases not even this proved sufficient; in one district a recipient made monthly trips from a neighboring state for eleven years to secure her order, while in two cases discovered during the study orders had been issued after the death of the recipient. These were small districts where previous acquaintance with cases was thought to make investigation unnecessary. Incidentally the original accounts for the Philadelphia Almshouse for 1739-40, in the possession of the Pennsylvania Historical Society, record two food orders issued to one woman after her burial order. In only 70 per cent of the county units and 55 per cent of the other districts is it reported that cases are closed on the

basis of some degree of investigation.

In considering these reported figures the lack of clear definition must be kept in mind. Under social case work standards a case is closed when the major problems, including the need for relief as only one phase, have been resolved, when the client ceases to come to the agency, or when the client's attitude makes successful adjustment impossible. Allegheny County Poor District illustrates the lack of clarity in definition. The number of active cases originally reported at the time of the study was 41,130, as shown by the number of cards in the active file. Since this comprised two-thirds of the total cases reported in all districts studied, which included 99 per cent of the state's population, further inquiry was made which resulted in a revised total of 10,855 cases.

#### Case Records

Since the financial status of cases is the chief concern of most poor directors, rather than family problems, it is not to be expected that complete case records in the social case work sense would be kept. For the determination of need, however, information is necessary which good administrative practice requires should be available to newly-elected poor directors on taking office. Even in the smallest districts a citizen's knowledge of his community is rarely so great that such information from a predecessor would not prove helpful.

For the purposes of this study a case record was defined as a record containing any information other than name, address, and amount of relief given: a definition far from the social case work ideal, but the only usable one in the study of poor board records. Even on this basis, the study showed that records are kept in only 20, or 8.3 per cent, of the township and borough districts as compared with 26 of the 50 county units. In 23 of these county units and 16 of the other districts some inspection of the records was made by field workers, who in most cases had some social case work training. An attempt was made to check the records examined as to specific items of information, rather than making a general evaluation. The general conclusion to be drawn is that records are incomplete. For example, in 10 of the 23 county units and 10 of the 16 oth-

er districts the records examined showed no evidence that statements regarding finances and legal settlement are verified; 16 of the county units and 9 of the other group lacked a chronological record of contacts made and visits to the family; 6 and 7 districts respectively, failed to show the reason for application. It does not follow, of course, that in these districts finances and settlement had not been verified, or contacts and family visits made, or reason for application ascertained; but the information did not appear on the record. In fact, comparison on specific points between case records and reported practice indicated that recording was quite incomplete in those districts where any records were kept. A much larger number of districts keep individual cards showing the amount of relief issued to each family, as shown in Chapter III.

## Chapter VIII

### Special Forms of Outdoor Relief

#### Summary

The boarding out of adults, care of non-residents and transients, medical care for the indigent and unemployment relief are special forms of outdoor relief by poor boards.

One-half of the county units and nearly two-thirds of all other districts boarded out adults, usually in the belief that boarding is cheaper than almshouse care; the payment frequently served as relief to the boarding family. Failure to investigate homes, inadequate payment and inadequate care of those boarded, of whom the majority are aged and infirm, is the rule.

Persons living in a poor district without having established legal residence were given temporary relief in two-thirds of the township and borough districts and 86 per cent of the county units. About half the latter made contact with the place of legal residence and arranged for transportation as a regular practice, while the former more frequently billed the legal residence for the amount of relief given. Transients usually received a night's lodging at the almshouse or jail and something to eat. Two-thirds of the township and borough districts had no special procedure, as compared with only 4 county units.

Practically all districts provided some medical care, usually paying physicians on a fee basis; county units more commonly than other districts provided hospital and nursing care and obstetrical service. Much of the burden of medical care for the indigent is shifted to the individual physician.

---

Routine administration of outdoor relief for the typical poor board case has been described. The complete picture includes also such special phases of poor board relief as the boarding out of adults, policies toward applicants lacking legal settlement in the poor district, and the provisions for medical relief, for which is summarized below the data from the field study, supplemented by annual re-

ports of poor districts to the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare and by correspondence. The care of dependent children and the place of poor boards in unemployment relief, part of outdoor relief in the broad sense, are discussed in Chapters IX and X respectively.

### Boarding Out of Adults

One-half the county units and two-thirds of all other districts follow the practice of boarding adults in private families as an alternative to almshouse care, usually as a matter of economy. Families can often be found willing to board relief cases for \$5.00 or even \$2.00 per week, whereas the average cost of almshouse care is about \$6.25, or \$25.00 per month. The extent of the practice is shown in Table 22 for the 425 poor districts of the state. The number placed in most districts having a boarding-out policy is small, and one-third of these districts had no cases at the time of the study. In the 395 districts for which the number at the time of the study was reported, only 9 (including 5 county units) were paying board for ten or more

TABLE 22

## EXTENT OF BOARDING OUT OF ADULTS

425 DISTRICTS (a)

Policy of	County Units		Other Districts		Total	
	No. of Districts	Per Cent	No. of Districts	Per Cent	No. of Districts	Per Cent
Boarding out adults:						
With cases at time of study	17	34.0	155	41.6	172	40.7
With no cases at time of study	8	16.0	89	23.9	97	22.9
No boarding out of adults	25	50.0	105	28.1	130	30.7
Not reported	-	-	24	6.4	24	5.7
Total	50	100.0	373	100.0	423	100.0
Number of cases reported	192		407		599	

(a) Philadelphia and Pittsburgh Departments of Public Welfare do not board out adults.



persons. Of the total 599 cases reported, 407 were in 155 township and borough districts, and 192 in 17 county units. A few additional districts try to force placement with relatives or occasionally place individuals in wage or free homes.

The practice arose in colonial days when there were no almshouses. To meet the problem of care in more than 300 township and borough districts without almshouses, the General Poor Relief Act of 1925 provided specifically that directors in these districts might contract for almshouse care in neighboring districts (Sec. 903). Almost half the 85 almshouse districts, however, 22 county units and 19 others were found to follow the policy of boarding out. These districts account for 148, about one-fourth, of the total cases reported.

The lack of adequate records is shown by inability to secure information as to age and disability for almost half the 599 cases. If this group is representative, half the individuals in the county units for whom this information is available, and three-quarters in other districts, were over fifty years of age, and in the township and borough districts half were over seventy. Disabilities reported, other than old age, included mental abnormality, paralysis, blindness and deafness. Half the county units and only 5 per cent of the township and borough districts kept any sort of social record of those boarded out, and in some districts not even their names could be given the field worker.

It is apparent that many of these persons need special infirmary care, such as in most districts neither almshouses nor the boarding families selected are prepared to give. The study shows that few of the poor boards make an investigation of the home as to fitness for care of the person boarded, or visits the homes after placement is made. The practice of "selling the poor" to the lowest bidder was followed in at least 27 township and borough districts. About 60 of the smaller districts made an attempt to place individuals with relatives. The practice varied from the district where clients are responsible for finding their own homes, or the other where the director stated to the field worker, "We put them in a shanty - a lot cheaper," to the district where a widow was kept in a home at \$40 a month to provide adequate care until her death, despite

bids of less than \$30 for what the directors felt would be inferior care. The lowest payment reported was \$3 per month; the highest, for a case requiring special attention, \$60 a month. Frequently the payment of \$5.00 or \$6.00 a week is expected to suffice for the family as well as the person boarded; this is considered economical administration. In one district payment was in the form of relief orders which no grocer would accept, and which were finally used as vouchers for the payment of taxes.

The evidence is conclusive that while boarding out can be an economical way of providing adequate care for selected individuals, such care is neither the chief consideration nor the practice in most districts. The files of the Department of Welfare contain numerous case histories, many with photographs of boarding homes, bearing witness on this point. Boarding out is essentially another survival from colonial days, along with the township and borough system itself.

#### Relief for Non-residents and Transients

The persistence in an industrial age of settlement provisions originally designed to prevent mobility of labor means that many persons have no legal claim to poor relief in the district where they become indigent, particularly when a township or a borough is the area within which they must live for one year without becoming a public charge to secure a legal settlement. Poor directors make a sharp distinction between the non-resident who has moved into the district too recently to have established residence, and the transient with no sort of local residence. The latter has long been a vexing problem to poor officials; at the 1877 convention of their state association, hanging a few "tramps" as an example was seriously proposed as a solution. <sup>1/</sup> The number of transients has enormously increased with depression unemployment. As reported to the study, two-thirds of the township and borough districts had early in 1934 no special procedure for dealing with them, while the others usually provided a night's lodging in the local jail or shelter, sometimes in special quarters at the almshouse. Only 10 reported referral to the Federal Transient Bureau or the County Emergency Relief Boards. Among the

---

<sup>1/</sup> *Proceedings of the Third Convention of the Association of Directors of the Poor and Charities*, 1877, p. 30.

county units, on the other hand, only 4 reported having no special procedure and a much higher proportion utilize the federal program, as is to be expected since most of its fifteen transient shelters are in urban centers. It is customary in most poor districts of the state to give some temporary relief.

In the case of the non-resident as well temporary relief is usually provided: in two-thirds of the township and borough districts studied and 42 county units. Half the latter make contact with the place of legal residence and arrange for transportation, while the small districts more often merely bill the place of legal residence for the cost of care given and do not arrange for transportation. The essential provisions of the General Poor Relief Act are that necessary aid shall be provided non-residents and the cost charged to the district of last legal settlement, which shall furnish the cost of transportation thereto and maintain the individuals; legal proceedings in case of dispute over responsibility are provided for (Sec. 801-805). Settlement, defined in the Act as "his right under the provisions of this act to relief in any particular poor district" (Sec. 10e), is established in a district by "any person not a public charge, married or single, who bona fide comes to inhabit therein and continues to reside there for one year" (Sec. 800). The settlement of children follows that of parent or guardian, and of wives that of their husbands.

Under the township and borough system, therefore, a person may spend all his life in one small county and yet be ineligible for relief because he has moved a few miles into another district. Lawsuits between districts are naturally rather frequent, and attended sometimes by legal costs greater than the amount of relief at issue, or of adequate relief. In one suit reported, two townships in a small county paid \$300 in legal expenses to determine which should pay a relief bill of \$90. In another case four townships in one county were involved. District A placed a woman who became dependent therein in the almshouse of District B, which thereupon sued District C in which her husband had legal residence, and won. During the year which had elapsed he had moved to District D, which was forced by legal action to accept responsibility; and when he later moved to District E a third lawsuit transferred responsibility there. The wife at no time had lived in the town-

ships involved in the litigation. Another source of lawsuits is "dumping," the removal of indigents from one district to another to avoid responsibility, which is common in practice although prohibited by the General Poor Relief Act (Sec. 805). Exact data on the extent of this practice are of course not available.

### Medical Care

Most poor districts provide some medical care for indigent persons, apparently on the assumption that the "necessary means of subsistence" it is their duty to provide under the General Poor Relief Act (Sec. 901) includes such care. Persons under quarantine and by reason of the quarantine "unable to pay the expense of the maintenance and treatment of his family or himself, during the period of the quarantine," are considered "poor persons" under the Act (Sec. 906).

Only 13 township and borough districts, besides the 9 which gave no outdoor relief in 1933, were reported as providing no medical care, as compared with 6 of the 50 county units. Twenty-three, including Allegheny County Poor District, and 14 county units paid salaries, usually nominal, to physicians; the others paid on a fee basis, usually with free choice of physician by the patient. Only half the township and borough districts paid for hospital care, however, as compared with four-fifths of the county units; while for nursing care the comparable figures are 11 and 24 per cent. Public and private homes and hospitals, rather than almshouses, provide most of such care, whether or not it was paid for by the poor district. About half these districts paid for obstetrical care, and two-thirds of the county units, with standard fees in 27 districts ranging from \$5.00 to \$45.00, the usual amount being \$25.00; 19 districts paid varying fees. Despite widespread opposition to the practice, births were reported in 12 of the almshouses. Prenatal care is usually considered the responsibility of the hospital or physician in charge of delivery rather than poor boards. Some districts provided dental care. Although exact data are not available, almost no preventive health service was provided by poor boards. An exception was the director who distributed tuberculosis literature to his clients.



It is thus clear that while most poor boards provide some medical care, much of the provision for persons actually receiving relief as well as for persons unable to pay doctor bills but not on relief lists represents a contribution by the physician himself. There is no way of telling how great a part of the public's responsibility is thus transferred to the private practitioner. A report issued in December, 1933, by the Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania after a study of medical relief by poor boards in forty-one counties stated that adequate and systematic arrangements for care of the poor was lacking in most of the States. Standard reduced fees for such service, similar to the plan adopted in December, 1933, for medical care to unemployment cases under the State Emergency Relief Board, were recommended:

Demand for quality in service will eventually require that Poor Boards dispense medical service in a similar manner, and if so it will result in economy and a great advance in care for the indigent. All contracts by physicians on the yearly or monthly basis for medical service to the "poor" outside of almshouses should be discontinued, and a reasonable schedule of fees should be agreed upon by a committee of the County Medical Societies and Poor Boards. Free choice of physician should be agreed upon and any dispute concerning lack of professional attention or question as to fees should be investigated and controlled by the County Medical Society Committee. 2/

The problem of adequate care for the indigent sick under a plan which will protect the interests of the recipients, the physician and the taxpayer is a part of the whole problem of the cost of medical care which is now receiving widespread attention. Under any plan the larger poor district offers opportunity for more adequate and coordinated service, unless the brunt of the burden is to be left with the individual physician.

---

2/ Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania, *Summary of Pennsylvania's Poor Relief Laws Affecting Care of Indigent Sick*, (Harrisburg, 1934), p. 12.





## Chapter IX

### Care of Dependent Children

#### Summary

Families receiving outdoor relief from poor boards included about one-tenth of the six hundred thousand Pennsylvania children receiving public aid in their own homes at the close of 1933. Since records are inadequate and the division of responsibility among poor boards, county commissioners and juvenile courts is not uniform or always clear, the place of poor boards in public and private care away from their own homes of the 29,737 children reported as of December 31, 1933, by the federal children's census cannot be stated.

Of the 302 districts other than county units studied, 179 reported "no children's work." For the remaining 73 districts responsibility for care of children away from their own homes was reported as divided between poor board and juvenile court in about three-fourths, as lying solely with the poor authorities in 14 and with the juvenile court alone in 6, corresponding to the situation in the 50 county units.

Private children's institutions and agencies able to provide proper care were available in many districts represented by the 175 children found in almshouses by the federal census, which showed the township and borough almshouses contained children less frequently than the larger institutions. Poor boards made actual placements in foster homes in 46 of the 73 districts: the boards only in 27, with private agencies also making placements in 7 and probation officers in 12. In only 2 of these, and 2 where directors did not make placements, were records kept of the children placed. The boards less often and private agencies more frequently make the placements in county units. No poor director in any district studied had special experience or training in child placement. Private agencies, existing in 31 of the 73 districts, were used for all placements in 17, for some in 7 and for none in the remaining 7.

---

Information on poor board care of dependent children,

especially away from their own homes, is drawn from the field study; the decennial census of dependent and neglected children in Pennsylvania by the United States Bureau of the Census as of December 31, 1933, for which complete data are on file with the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare; and basic data assembled by the Department since its creation in 1921, including reports of the supervisory visits to poor directors in their capacity as child-placing agents which are its legal responsibility under the Administrative Code of 1929. 1/

### Division of Responsibility

Nearly six hundred thousand Pennsylvania children received public aid in their own homes in 1933, including 61,359 in families receiving outdoor relief from poor boards, 22,562 aided by the Mothers' Assistance Fund, and an estimated 504,411 in families receiving unemployment relief from the State Emergency Relief Administration. Thus only 10 per cent were in poor board families, although they were originally a responsibility of the poor authorities alone. As the previous discussion of outdoor relief and almshouse administration indicates, high standards of family life for these children is not the chief aim of poor officials. The federal census reports that 52 per cent of a total 29,737 children under public and private care away from their own homes in the state (excluding all districts placing less than ten children during the year) were supported wholly or in part by public funds; while 70 per cent of the 12,741 such children in foster homes received public support. There is no way of discovering how many of these were the direct responsibility of poor officials, because of the exclusion referred to, the inadequacy of records as shown by the field study, and the lack of a clear division of responsibility among poor boards, county commissioners and juvenile courts. The respective share of the bills for care of children paid by poor boards and county commissioners varies widely according to type of poor relief organization, as Table 23 shows. In the counties under the township and borough system two-thirds of the expense is borne by county commissioners, although for total welfare expenditures the poor boards bear the higher share. There is, however, no uniformity within the various types of organization, and generalizations are unreliable.

---

1/ XXIII, Sec. 2302b, 2302, 2304.

TABLE 23

EXPENDITURES FROM LOCAL TAX FUNDS FOR CARE OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN  
AWAY FROM THEIR OWN HOMES IN DISTRICTS HAVING VARIOUS TYPES  
OF POOR RELIEF ORGANIZATION, WITH PER CENT DISBURSED BY EACH

1933

Type of Organization	No. of Counties	Expenditures By				Total	
		County Commissioners		Poor Boards		Amount	Per Cent
		Amount	Per Cent	Amount	Per Cent		
County units with separate poor directors	28	\$ 480,521	58.5	\$341,417	41.5	\$ 821,938	100
County units with county commissioners as poor directors	22	43,689	22.5	150,394	77.5	194,083	100
Township and borough system	15	77,920	67.8	164,100	32.2	242,020	100
Allegheny County	1	514,362	100.0	-	-	514,362	100
Philadelphia County	1	1,700,000	86.6	261,980	13.4	1,961,980	100
Total	67	\$2,816,492	75.4	\$917,891	24.6	\$3,734,383	100

In practice each county has worked out some division of responsibility among poor boards, county commissioners, and juvenile court. In the majority of cases responsibility is shared with a resulting lack of uniform standards and the opportunity to shift responsibility to a different group of officials. As Table 24 shows, there is no great difference between county units and the 73 other districts in this respect. The statutes governing poor districts and juvenile courts themselves contribute to the confusion. The General Poor Relief Act includes children having a legal residence in a poor district among the needy persons for whom the directors are to provide. It further specifies as their duty the placing of children over two years of age who are in their charge "in some respectable family or in some educational institution or home for children" (Sec. 905), except that a child who is "an unteachable idiot, an epileptic, or paralytic or otherwise so disabled or deformed as to render it incapable of labor or service" may be maintained in an almshouse (Sec. 904). The provisions in the Act for appropriations to "incorporated associations maintained by gifts and voluntary contributions and formed for the purpose of assisting, relieving, and giving medical

TABLE 24

## RESPONSIBILITY FOR PUBLIC WORK WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN

Responsibility	County Units		Other Districts		Total	
	No. of Districts	Per Cent	No. of Districts	Per Cent	No. of Districts	Per Cent
Sole responsibility:						
Poor Board (a)	12	24.0	14	19.2	26	21.1
Juvenile Court	2	4.0	6	8.2	8	6.5
Divided responsibility:						
Poor Board and Juvenile Court	31	62.0	53	72.6	84	68.3
County Commissioners and* Juvenile Court	3	6.0	-	-	3	2.5
Poor Board, Juvenile Court and County Commissioners	2	4.0	-	-	2	1.6
Total	50	100.0	73 <sup>(b)</sup>	100.0	123	100.0
No children's work	-		179		179	
Grand total	50		252		302	

(a) Includes County Commissioners serving as Directors of the Poor.

(b) Includes Philadelphia and Pittsburgh Departments of Public Welfare.

care and attention to the poor, injured, or sick<sup>m</sup> within the districts (Sec. 910) permit placement of children by private agencies.

The Juvenile Court Law, however, introduces different machinery and the theory that a child can be dependent or neglected without being poor in the usual sense. The 1933 law, 2/ now in effect, defines a dependent child as one who (a) is homeless or destitute, or without proper support or care, through no fault of his or her parent, guardian, custodian, or legal representative; or (b) lacks care by reason of the mental or physical condition of the parent, etc. The Act defines a neglected child essentially as one lacking proper care through the fault of parents, etc.; one who is found in a disreputable place or who associates with vagrant, vicious, or immoral persons; or one who engages in an occupation, or in a situation, dangerous to life or limb or injurious to health or morals. The purpose of juvenile court legislation is thus primarily to provide proper parental care or guardianship for children lacking it rather than to aid the poor. The court commits children in its care to its own paid probation officers or to public or

2/ 1933, June 2, P.L. 1433; replacing the first Juvenile Court Law, 1903, April 23, P.L. 274.



private child caring agencies, including poor boards, and the cost is borne by the county commissioners. "Juvenile court" is a term designating any court of quarter sessions sitting in special session for children's cases, except in Allegheny County where it is an individual court, and Philadelphia where it is part of the municipal court.

### Children in Almshouses

In general the 665 children cared for in Pennsylvania almshouses during 1933 were in the larger institutions rather than the township and borough districts. Practically all the 89 births in almshouses were in the larger ones, and the 18 almshouses keeping children over two years of age, sound in body and mind, longer than the sixty-day limit set by the General Poor Relief Act (Sec. 904) were also the larger institutions. The explanation is perhaps that facilities in these smaller poorhouses are so obviously inadequate for the care of children that no attempt is made to keep them there. That children should be in almshouses at all shows that public child care has not caught up with the principles of the private agencies.

### Placement of Children by Poor Directors

More commonly, in county units as well as other districts, children are placed for care in children's institutions, public or private, or in foster homes. The following discussion of practices is based on information for all county units and 73 of the other districts, since the directors reported in 179 of the 252 township and borough districts covered by the social study that no children's work was being carried on by themselves or so far as they knew by other agencies.

Responsibility for whatever investigation is made to determine whether a particular child should be removed from his own home lies with the poor board alone in more than half the 73 districts, as compared with one-fourth of the county units. Responsibility is shared with probation officer or private agency in half the county units and a quarter of the other districts. The exact number of children placed directly by poor boards is unknown because the records are incomplete; a total of 1334 were reported at

the time of the study, of which 770 were in 31 county units. Of the remaining 564 placed by 43 boards, three-fifths were charges of the Philadelphia Department of Public Welfare. Most of these children were placed in boarding homes: 76.5 per cent in county units, and 67.5 per cent in the other districts. One-fifth the total in the units and one-fourth in the 73 other districts had been placed in free homes. The county unit poor boards had placed 23 children in wage homes, as compared with 32 in the other districts. No cases were reported of the time-honored practice of indenture, prohibited by law since 1927, <sup>3/</sup> although one township poor director stated he was seeking a place for one boy. The wage homes in some cases represent the principle minus the formality of a contract which would constitute actual indenture.

None of the directors or poor board employees who made these placements had special experience or training in children's work. In a number of districts the decision as to placement in foster homes or institutions was frankly stated to hinge on the question of immediate cost. That economy is not the sole consideration is shown by the district, typical of others found, which paid \$4.25 per week for the care of a child in an institution rather than increase the weekly relief order to the child's family above the customary \$3.50. In general, careful investigation and individual planning for each child such as is required for adequate care is lacking. Many districts, especially the townships and boroughs, keep no records of children placed and their identity may be completely lost. Only 7 of the 31 county units placing children directly and 2 of the 43 other districts kept both family and placement records, while 13 in the first group and 35 in the second kept no records at all. In the majority of the districts where directors place children they do not make supervisory visits semi-annually as required by the General Poor Relief Act (Sec: 905). In this respect, again, the county units make a better showing than the other districts.

The obvious conclusion is that poor authorities doing their own placing of dependent children fail to provide adequate care, whether by accepted standards for private agencies or the legal minimum. An outstanding exception is the Philadelphia Department of Public Welfare.

---

3/ 1927, May 11, P.L. 961.

## Cooperation with Private Agencies

In 65 of the districts where poor boards undertake some work with children, including 34 county units and 31 other districts, the services of private child caring agencies are available. In 17 of these county units and 30 of the latter, the agencies have professionally trained staffs. Three of the 34 county units and 7 of 31 other districts, make no use of private agency service, while 12 units and 17 other districts use the local agency for all placements. The cost of this service to the poor districts is usually less than when they carry on the work themselves. Although 6 county units pay a lump subsidy to the agency, the usual plan is to pay a weekly amount for each child. Three of the county units and 5 other districts, including Allegheny County, make use of private agencies but make no payment. Such cooperation provides individual planning and careful, skilled supervision for each child. It likewise produces actual economy because thorough investigation reduces the number placed and supervision assures that public expense is continued no longer than necessary.

The care provided by most poor districts where the poor boards participate in children's work is below the accepted standards of private agencies. The districts where the directors make use of the services of private agencies for investigation and placement demonstrate the economy of skilled service and the possibility of providing it under the present system of poor relief. In practically all aspects of the care of dependent children except keeping children in almshouses, the township and borough districts are further than the county units from providing adequate care for the children in their charge.



## Chapter X

### Unemployment Relief

#### Summary

Prior to the First Talbot Act, effective in April, 1932, appropriating \$10,000,000 of state funds to be administered by the poor boards without state supervision, poor boards either handled unemployment cases the same as other applicants, or refused aid, while many small districts recognized no special problem.

Official audits of expenditures under the Act revealed irregularities such as the use of funds for purposes not provided for by the Act or prohibited, including administration, luxuries, or payments to persons not in need, somewhat more frequently in the township and borough districts. Incomplete records and failure to segregate these funds made a complete audit impossible.

Dissatisfaction with poor board handling of unemployment relief led to establishment of the State Emergency Relief Board in August, 1932, to administer later state and federal funds. In 1934 almost half the counties were in nine administrative units, with administration otherwise on a county basis. Poor boards had turned over many of the aged and other unemployables which were their legal responsibility. In general, poor directors strongly maintained that they should administer unemployment relief.

---

The financial depression following the 1929 crash added the able-bodied unemployed to the groups requiring public aid and what is still designated as emergency unemployment relief to the existing forms of public assistance. The relation of poor boards to relief for the unemployed, as distinguished from the unemployable indigent group recognized as typical poor board cases, has passed through three stages. Until 1932 aid to the unemployed was generally considered the responsibility of local unemployment committees or other private groups; the poor boards administered \$10,000,000 provided by the First Talbot Act, beginning in April, 1932; and the State Emergency Relief Board administered state and federal funds after its creation in August, 1932. Information on the part played by the poor



boards comes from the field study and more particularly from reports of the executive director of the State Emergency Relief Board 1/ and the Auditor General's report on expenditures by poor boards of First Talbot Act funds, 2/ summarized in Table 27, Appendix A.

### Unemployment Relief Prior to the First Talbot Act

The poor boards provided comparatively little unemployment relief before the First Talbot Act. In Pennsylvania as in the rest of the country during the first two years of the depression local unemployment committees were organized to administer private funds much as for any other emergency in time of disaster. As the depression continued these funds proved inadequate and public authorities came more prominently into the picture. The depression made tax collections more difficult and regular poor funds were not equal to the added load, however. During this period many poor boards handled a certain proportion of unemployment cases the same as their regular cases while numerous others refused aid to the able-bodied unemployed. Some cooperated closely with the private committees. In the small rural districts, particularly, many recognized no special unemployment problem in their territory.

In January, 1931, the King Committee report to the Governor indicated that existing county unemployment committees could meet the unemployment problem, particularly through a public works program. 3/ The Governor's Planning Committee on Unemployment also known as the Baker Committee, was appointed in July and submitted in August the result of a quick survey foreshadowing the need of state appropriations. 4/

### The First Talbot Act

The First Talbot Act 5/ was passed at the end of the

1/ State Emergency Relief Board, *Unemployment Relief in Pennsylvania*, September 1, 1932--October 1, 1933 (Harrisburg, 1933).

*Ibid.*, *Unemployment Relief in Pennsylvania*, October 1, 1933--November 1, 1934 (Harrisburg, 1934).

2/ Pennsylvania Bureau of Audits and Accounts, *State Auditor's Report of First Talbot Fund by Counties* (Harrisburg, 1933-1934), unpublished.

3/ *Alleviating Unemployment: A Report by the Pennsylvania Committee on Unemployment to Gifford Pinchot, Governor* (Harrisburg, 1931), p. 5.

4/ "Relief Needs and Conditions in Pennsylvania, August, 1931." Contained in *Public Hearing on Statewide Unemployment Relief Before Members of the General Assembly, November 24, 1931*, (Harrisburg, 1931) p. 3. Republished with Summary of subsequent discussions of legality of state relief, in *Social Service Review*, Vol. V. No. 3, (Dec. 1931), pp. 596-628.

5/ 1931, December 28, P.L. 1503.

year in a special session of the legislature called to deal with unemployment relief, became law without the governor's signature, and after being declared constitutional went into effect in April, 1932. The Act appropriated \$10,000,000 of state funds for relief to the unemployed to be allocated by the Department of Welfare on the basis of the estimated number of unemployed in each district. Section 4 specified:

Each political subdivision...shall have authority...to expend the moneys received from the appropriation made by this act for the purpose of providing food, clothing, fuel and shelter for residents within their districts who are without means of support. In no case shall any of said appropriation be used for paying cash, commonly known as a "dole," to persons entitled to relief.

The Act also provided that none of the appropriation should be used for its administration. Since no new revenues were provided, the sum came from "abatement" or reduction of the Mothers' Assistance Fund and grants to state-aided hospitals and other institutions. No provision was made for state supervision.

The poor boards of the state were accustomed to administering poor relief after the manner described in Chapter VII and by Frankel in his 1925 report. In the words of the executive director of the State Emergency Relief Board, "The \$10,000,000 of First Talbot funds were to all intents and purposes so much additional poor relief money and they were, naturally, so administered by the poor relief officials." 6/

On the basis of the State Auditor's reports of Talbot Fund expenditures it is correct to say that the exact nature of disbursements under the Act will never be known, but that a large sum went for purposes either prohibited or not provided for in the Act. Administration charges, luxuries and cash relief payments fall in the first class. Dubious expenditures include those for purposes other than unemployment or other than "food, clothing, fuel and shelter," since the Act for reasons of constitutionality did not specify that grants should be limited to the unemployed. The official audit reveals irregularities in both county units and the township and borough system counties, with the record on the whole favoring the former. A total of

---

6/ State Emergency Relief Board, *Unemployment Relief in Pennsylvania September 1, 1932 - October 1, 1933*. (Harrisburg, 1933). p. 13.

\$166,694.73 in dubious expenditures is definitely accounted for in the audits, but in at least 12 counties where no amount is reported dubious expenditures are definitely known to have occurred, or incomplete records made a check impossible. In 6 of the 15 township and borough counties, and 7 of the 50 county units, Talbot funds were not separated from regular poor board funds; in one of the former the auditors state, "It was noted that the unemployed received no benefit from these (Talbot) relief funds." In 2 county units and 3 other counties the auditors found no written orders; in 4 counties under the township and borough system numerous records were reported destroyed or mislaid, and in many districts wholly lacking.

Administrative expenses ranging from salaries and travelling expenses to commissions of two to five per cent for treasurers disbursing the funds were reported paid from the Fund. Institutional expenses for children and adults and medical care unconnected with unemployment were recorded. The list of questionable items in the township and borough poor districts of one county includes cigarettes, playing cards, magazines, stationery, ink, shotgun shells, batteries, haircuts, and candy; physicians' fees, ambulance hire, express charges and printing expenses. It was in a county unit, however, that alimony was paid, and in another that the cost of two beer analyses (during prohibition) was charged to the Talbot Fund. In a few cases directors of the poor gave themselves relief or profited from an interest in firms from which purchases were made. Payment of merchants' bills without supporting orders or invoices was frequent. In most districts little investigation of need was made. A sort of climax is the instance reported from a district in a coal mining region, where two brothers were paid \$2.50 per net ton for coal ordinarily selling at \$1.75, filling three-fourths of the local orders, and in addition received \$5.00 relief orders each week.

Restrictions and red tape in various districts tended to defeat the intention of the Act to provide quick relief, without strings attached. In some districts recipients had to sign bonds guaranteeing return of full value received, or sign over to the poor boards their insurance policies. Although the funds were intended for immediate use, at the time of the audit made between November, 1933 and May, 1934, unexpended balances totalling \$126,399.96 were found. On the whole the picture in the county units is somewhat

better than under the township and borough system, but it is not surprising that when further state funds were provided for unemployment relief public opinion was against their administration by the poor boards.

#### Poor Boards and the State Emergency Relief Board

Quite aside from any question of maladministration, the increasing number of unemployed in the state made further funds necessary. A second special session of the legislature created through the Woodward Act 7/ the State Emergency Relief Board, consisting of the governor, lieutenant-governor, auditor general, state treasurer and speaker of the House of Representatives, charged with the duty of planning and adopting a comprehensive plan for unemployment relief and allocating the \$12,000,000 appropriated to it on the same date by the Second Talbot Act. 8/ Since that time the poor districts have taken practically no direct responsibility for unemployment cases. Their annual reports to the Department of Welfare list unemployment as the reason for relief in 106,700 of the total 139,220 families reported as receiving relief in 1933, but these are almost exclusively Emergency Relief Board cases receiving supplementary shoes and clothing, the field study indicates. Assignment of "the" reason for relief is of course scientifically impossible, and the figures are open to question.

In each county a County Emergency Relief Board of appointed unpaid citizens was placed in charge of unemployment relief. Their function has become almost entirely advisory, with actual administration by the state body through paid staffs in nine "areas" comprising almost half the counties in the state, and county units elsewhere. In theory the poor boards remain charged with responsibility for the indigent, the aged, and chronic unemployables, while the Emergency Relief Boards confine their aid to employables out of work. Actually the poor boards, beset by financial difficulties, in a great many districts turned over the unemployables along with unemployment cases when County Emergency Relief Boards were organized, and in some districts as high as 80 per cent of cases under care by the latter were estimated to be properly poor board cases. This

---

7/ 1932, August 19, P.L. 88.

8/ 1932, August 19, P.L. 90.



transfer has occurred in both county units and other poor districts.

While emergency relief has thus relieved the poor boards of practically all the unemployment cases formerly under their care, and some of their own cases as well, it has in some districts wrought changes in methods of administering outdoor relief. These changes cannot be measured but instances have been reported where relief grants have been increased somewhat toward the emergency relief figure based on family needs, or where better investigation is carried on as a result of the example set. In most of the counties, incidentally, investigation by the emergency relief administration resulted quickly in dropping from the rolls a substantial proportion of those who had received unemployment relief under the poor boards.

In practice the county or area unit under state supervision has proved more efficient and economical than the traditional poor district system for the administration of emergency relief. What the effect will be on the organization of permanent relief, particularly as emergency stretches toward permanency for many of the unemployed, remains to be seen. To many observers the history of unemployment relief administration provides a strong argument for abolition of the township and borough system of poor relief, if not for the organization of unified county administration by qualified workers under unpaid citizen boards to handle the various forms of relief now provided -- poor relief as such, unemployment relief, mothers' assistance, blind pensions old age assistance and veterans' relief.



## Chapter XI

### Allegheny and Philadelphia Counties

#### Summary

Allegheny and Philadelphia Counties are excepted from the provisions of the General Poor Relief Act. The Allegheny County Poor District functions outside the City of Pittsburgh essentially as a county unit with elected poor directors, while the director of the Pittsburgh Department of Public Welfare is appointed by the mayor and funds are appropriated by the city council. Each district maintains an almshouse, a mental hospital and a tuberculosis hospital. The County District case load was almost one-third of the state total, but represented largely supplementary relief to Emergency Relief Board cases. The Department's relief was almost exclusively medical care and relief to non-residents, the typical poor board cases being cared for by private agencies. The juvenile court provides most public care of children.

The Philadelphia Department of Public Welfare, with a director appointed by the mayor, likewise confines outdoor relief almost entirely to non-residents; children's work is the chief activity of the Bureau of Assistance. Medical care and the local mental hospital are under the Department of Public Health. A four-mill poor tax levied throughout the city is not segregated for the Department, for which appropriations are made by city council. Six independent districts, varying widely in size, organization, relief program and administration, covering the northern half of the city but only one-sixth the population, represent retention for poor relief purposes only of township and borough lines otherwise abolished at the time of city consolidation in 1854. Two small rural districts operate under general laws for townships; all levy separate poor taxes. Local pride is an important factor in preventing the consolidation repeatedly recommended.

---

Allegheny and Philadelphia Counties have special systems of poor relief which are, especially the latter, analogous to the township and borough system proper. Both are excepted from provisions of the General Poor Relief Act of

1925 (in Sec. 200a,b). They contain the two largest cities, the three largest almshouses, the largest outdoor relief case load, and the oldest poor districts in Pennsylvania. Since these districts have been included in parts of the previous discussion, there is some repetition in the picture here presented. In addition to the field studies of financial and outdoor relief administration and the annual reports of poor districts to the State Department of Welfare previously referred to, information is drawn from a special survey of local laws applying to Philadelphia districts in connection with the state-wide study, material in the files of the Philadelphia Bureau of Municipal Research, and a special study of welfare and relief by the Bureau of Social Research of the Federation of Social Agencies of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. 1/

#### Allegheny County Poor District

Allegheny County Poor District, established in 1881, has jurisdiction over that part of the county outside the boundaries of the City of Pittsburgh, and the powers and duties of the three elected directors of the poor are similar to those in county units. Income is derived from a separate poor tax levy. Financial record-keeping is unique in the state in being under the supervision of a private firm of public accountants, and includes one of the most thorough systems met with in the field study. According to evidence produced in a taxpayers' action against the poor directors in 1932, 2/ which was awaiting decision on appeal to the State Supreme Court in 1934, the system did not prevent malfeasance. The evidence showed that there had been no audit of poor board accounts by the county since 1912; that 40 per cent of the district's relief funds were apportioned to administration; that \$500,000 from bonds issued ostensibly for new construction was used for old debts and general operating expenses; that insurance brokerage firms controlled by two of the directors received large contracts for insurance on the almshouse property; that three tracts of land for the county home were purchased through a "straw man" and repurchased at a total mark-up of \$40,000; and that a piggery de luxe, with a \$3,000 home for the foreman in charge, had cost \$60,000 without being completed.

1/ Edith Miller Tufts, *Family Welfare and Relief Activities in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, 1920-1931* (Pittsburgh, Bureau of Social Research, Federation of Social Agencies of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, 1932).

2/ Allegheny Court of Common Pleas, Bill No. 3009, January term, 1932.

The almshouse at Woodville had in 1933 an average daily population of 1,391, exclusive of the mental hospital run in connection with it, and like other large almshouses in the state was overcrowded. Outdoor relief was confined largely to food, shoes and coal, issued under very detailed regulations. More than half the cases of the Family Welfare Association in this territory during October, 1931, were receiving aid to supplement this poor relief. On the other hand, much of the poor board relief in 1933 supplemented emergency unemployment relief. The nature of the relief granted goes far to explain the fact that the 10,855 cases of this district constituted nearly one-third of the total reported in the State at the time of the present study. The field study revealed 41,020 cases in the "active" file; but later correspondence established that the number stated above received relief in March, 1934, indicating incomplete separation of records for active and inactive cases.

The territory is divided into fourteen subdistricts with twenty-seven paid investigators, more than are employed in any other Pennsylvania district. Eighty-eight physicians receive regular payments for care of outdoor relief cases. Neither county nor city poor district reported any expenditures for care of children away from their own homes, which is in the hands of the juvenile court.

#### Pittsburgh Department of Public Welfare

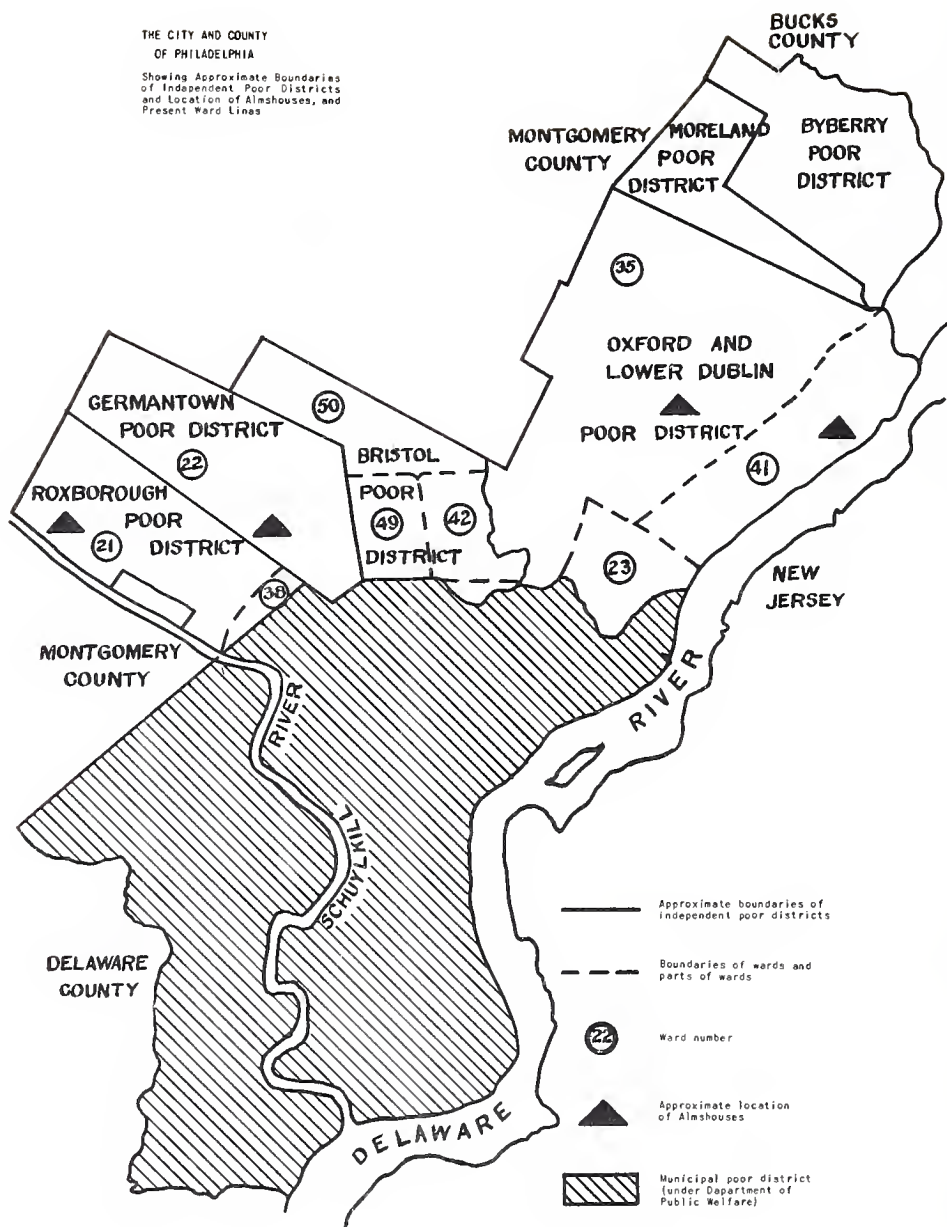
The Pittsburgh Department of Public Welfare succeeding in 1923 the Department of Charities and Corrections which superseded in 1887 the earlier overseers and guardians of the poor, is under a Director appointed by the Mayor. Appropriations by the City Council are the source of income, with no separate poor tax. Pittsburgh maintains the second largest almshouse in the State at Mayview, with an average daily population in 1933 of 1789. In accordance with an agreement with private agencies in the city made in 1914 the Department does not give outdoor relief to families in their homes except in case of quarantine. Medical care, and relief to non-residents form the bulk of non-almshouse expenditures. In connection with the mental hospital psychiatric social workers are employed.

#### Philadelphia Independent Poor Districts

Pennsylvania poor relief began in Philadelphia, since

THE CITY AND COUNTY  
OF PHILADELPHIA

Showing Approximate Boundaries  
of Independent Poor Districts  
and Location of Almshouses, and  
Present Ward Lines





the two were almost synonymous. The history of poor districts in what is now Philadelphia County is that of all changes in local units which culminated in the consolidation of 1854 making city and county coterminous, which cannot be traced in detail here. That consolidation left outside the city government, for poor relief purposes only, six independent districts covering the northern half of the city which retain former township and borough boundaries (see map on the preceding page). Five-sixths of the 1930 city population is in the remaining territory under the municipal district.

Citizens in some cases may vote for one set of poor directors and receive relief from another, since in no independent district do the boundaries coincide exactly with ward lines. It is sometimes impossible to know where the lines lie, since the colonial rocks and trees of the legal description vanished long ago. Roughly the districts correspond to wards and to communities whose local pride is one reason for their continued existence. It is argued that personal acquaintance with cases and quick action make for efficient administration. Repeated charges of inefficiency and maladministration sometimes substantiated in court records, have thus far failed to bring about unified administration of poor relief in the third largest city of the United States. The most detailed record is that found in the report of the 1932 Legislative Committee, cited in Chapter III. 3/

The independent poor districts vary in size, organization, and methods; details of organization are given in Table 25, Appendix A. They are as follows, in order of location from west to east:

Roxborough: The Twenty-first Ward except for the former borough of Manayunk, which is part of the municipal district; and part of the Thirty-eighth Ward. Administered by three "Directors of the Poor of the Township of Roxborough."

Germanatown: The Twenty-second Ward. Administered by nine "Managers for the Relief and Employment of the Poor of the Township of Germanatown."

---

3/ *Report of Committee of House of Representatives Appointed to Investigate the Special Poor Districts of the City of Philadelphia* (Harrisburg, Appendix to the Legislative Journal, 1933), pp. 7296-7364).



Bristol: The former Forty-second Ward, now the Forty-second, Forty-ninth and Fiftieth. Administered by four "Guardians for the Relief and Employment of the Poor of the Township of Bristol."

Oxford and Lower Dublin: Twenty-third, Forty-first, and greater part of the Thirty-fifth Wards, comprising the former townships of Oxford, Lower Dublin, and Delaware, and the former borough of Frankford. Administered by 8 "Directors of the Poor and of the House of Employment for the Townships of Oxford and Lower Dublin of Philadelphia County."

Moreland: Part of the Thirty-fifth Ward. Administered by one "Overseer of the Poor of Moreland Township."

Byberry: Part of the Thirty-fifth Ward. Administered by two "Overseers of the Poor of Byberry Township."

The last two operate apparently under the general laws applying to township poor districts, the others for the most part under numerous local and special laws. It would appear the legal number of directors in Moreland District is two. No salaries are paid in these essentially rural districts with a combined population less than 2500, or in Germantown, which at the time of the study allowed \$200 annual expenses to each director, however; in the others the salary is \$500. Each district levies a separate poor tax, collected in Moreland and Byberry by the directors (although levies are rarely made), in Roxborough by the Receiver of Taxes of the City of Philadelphia, and in the others by district tax collectors. Financial records vary from a complete accounting system in the Germantown district to cash books in the two smallest districts. The original book begun in 1754 is still used in Byberry, where the family of the present directors has included either director or auditor since establishment of the district. No district keeps complete case records, although cards showing the amount of relief given are used in the larger districts. In two of these individual directors keep their own, without a central record. Two clear their cases with the Social Service Exchange, in one district after decision

as to granting relief is made. The three large districts, each of which has a population of over 100,000, employ investigators: one, besides the executive director, in Germantown; one in Bristol; and five in Oxford and Lower Dublin. Social case work is not attempted in any district; the extent and quality of investigation varies. The number of cases receiving outdoor relief ranges from 1737 in the last-named district to 2 in Byberry. The usual weekly grant to families of five is \$3.00 or \$5.00. There is some cooperation with other agencies in most of the districts. The Germantown, Oxford and Lower Dublin, and Roxborough districts maintain almshouses, with average daily populations in 1933 of 127, 96, and 17 respectively.

Care of dependent children is usually referred to private agencies or the juvenile court. In one district a few adults are boarded out; there were no central records to show how many. The division of responsibility and general relationship with the County Emergency Relief Board varies from district to district. Several directors interviewed share the strong feeling common among directors in the State that unemployment relief should be assigned to the poor boards. In almost all respects the districts show variation, so that no single characterization can be made. In general there is lack of coordination, if not duplication of effort, and care of the poor is not greatly different from a cross-section of township and borough districts elsewhere in Pennsylvania.

#### Philadelphia Department of Public Welfare

The director of the Philadelphia Department of Public Welfare is appointed by the Mayor. Although four mills of the Philadelphia taxpayer's bill is labeled poor tax, this has no direct connection with the income of the Department which is derived from appropriations by City Council.

The Home for the Indigent, located at Holmesburg, is the largest almshouse in the State, with an average population in 1933 of 1879. Philadelphia's mental hospital, at Byberry, is under the Department of Public Health, as is all medical care for the indigent. Outdoor relief by the Department of Public Welfare is limited almost altogether to non-residents, although there is no special agreement as in Pittsburgh. The chief work of the Bureau of Assistance

is in care of dependent children, a responsibility shared with the juvenile court. The Department includes a Bureau of Corrections which conducts the House of Correction, and a Bureau of Recreation, both representing types of expenditures not found in any other poor districts.

Perhaps the most striking part of the picture of poor relief administration in Philadelphia is the fact that for five-sixths of the population living in the municipal district, there is no public poor relief in the usual sense, while in the remaining districts there is no uniformity of practice. There would seem to be no question that more adequate service would be possible with some unified organization in the city.

## Chapter XII

### Summary and Conclusions

Seventeen Pennsylvania counties divided into 375 separate poor districts, usually townships or boroughs, are under what is broadly termed the township and borough system of poor relief, as contrasted with the fifty county units comprising the rest of the state. The 123 township and borough districts not covered in the present study include only 1.1 per cent of the state's population.

The township and borough system is a survival from the days of William Penn, with roots in the England of Queen Elizabeth and Henry VIII.

Township and borough districts (excluding Allegheny and Philadelphia Counties) contain 13.3 per cent of the state population and expended 25.5 per cent of the total relief by poor districts in 1933. As shown by their annual reports to the State Department of Welfare, 17.9 per cent of total expenditures by these districts was for administration as compared with 13.3 per cent in the county units, although most directors in the former serve without salary: a difference not reflected in better service to the indigent. The proportion of total welfare expenditures borne by the poor boards as compared with county governments is much greater under the township and borough system.

Each typical township or borough poor district has two directors or overseers of the poor, two auditors, usually a solicitor, and often clerical employes, with resulting duplication of expense. With few exceptions neither the directors nor the employes concerned with relief administration have social welfare experience or training. Knowledge of legal responsibilities is frequently lacking.

Thirty-eight districts other than county units maintain almshouses, twenty-three of which had in 1933 an average population under twenty-five. High administrative expense, poorly qualified personnel and inadequate service necessarily accompany the small institution.

Outdoor relief is characterized by haphazard methods and policies; the survival in eighty-nine districts of re-

lief orders by justices of the peace, outlawed by the General Poor Relief Act of 1925; lack of investigation before grants; practically no effort to deal constructively with family problems; failure to cooperate with other welfare agencies, except in the care of dependent children; and lack of case records. Despite exceptions in individual districts, township and borough districts on the whole compare unfavorably on all these points with county units.

Two-thirds of these districts, as compared with half the county units, board out indigent adults, and many "sell the poor" to the lowest bidder. Most of them provide some medical care, while few provide nursing care. For transients the usual treatment is a night's lodging and an invitation to move on; for others lacking legal settlement in the district, temporary relief and billing of the legal residence, resulting often in lawsuits between districts.

Practically all county unit poor boards, but less than one-third of the others studied, carry on work with dependent children, usually sharing responsibility for their care with the juvenile court. Most of the boards doing children's work make use of private child-placing agencies where they exist. Forty-three township and borough poor boards in 1933 placed children directly, usually less than five per district, although in only three of the districts did any director have social welfare experience or training. For many placements no records were kept.

Lack of uniformity in granting relief, inadequate records and frequently the use of funds for purposes not provided by law characterized the administration by the poor boards of the First Talbot Fund for unemployment relief. Subsequent state and federal unemployment funds were not entrusted to the poor boards. Upon organization of county emergency relief boards many districts transferred to them not only unemployment cases but also the "unemployables," who remained a poor board responsibility. In unemployment relief the township or borough, and sometimes the county, has proved too small a unit for efficient administration.

Pittsburgh and Allegheny County poor districts resemble the county units in size and administration. The former gives medical relief and aid to transients and non-residents, but the typical poor board cases in the city have been cared for since 1914 by a private agency. Relief



given by the county district usually supplements that of the Allegheny County Emergency Relief Board. This district reports 29 per cent of the total poor board cases in the 99 per cent of the state's population included in the study.

Philadelphia's six independent districts following former township and borough boundaries vary in size, organization and administration. The municipal district includes five-sixths of the city's population; as in Pittsburgh, the typical poor board case is not cared for by the Department of Public Welfare. Care of dependent children is a major part of the program, while medical care is the responsibility of the Department of Public Health.

### Conclusions

The study of poor relief administration in 300 Pennsylvania districts brings out clearly the existing crazy quilt confusion of poor relief laws and practices, particularly under the township and borough system of poor relief. It is clear that many districts provide less than the "necessary means of subsistence" required of them by law, and this inadequate relief at unnecessarily high cost; also that the poor boards almost without exception have failed to keep pace with changing principles in private welfare work. The study also shows clearly that the small township and borough districts in general give less adequate service at higher cost than county unit poor districts, and that the difference is in part a function of size. The mere multiplicity of units makes it more difficult also to coordinate the various forms of relief. The poor boards play a decreasingly important part when all public assistance is considered.

Suggestions for improvement of the present system follow three main lines: to assign the administration of unemployment relief and possibly other forms of aid to the poor boards as now constituted; to change to county unit poor districts throughout the State, possibly excepting Allegheny and Philadelphia Counties; and to establish county welfare boards. The latter would be similar to the present Mothers' Assistance and County Emergency Relief Boards except that they would have general supervision over all or most of the present forms of public relief: poor relief, unemployment

relief, Mothers' Assistance, blind pensions, old age assistance, and veterans' relief.

The first proposal, to give the poor boards as now constituted further responsibility, is advanced chiefly by the poor directors. Such a move would reverse the trend through which poor relief has become merely one of the six forms of public assistance in Pennsylvania listed above, and has given the county commissioners a large share in welfare expenditures from local tax funds. This is not necessarily in itself a valid argument against the change. The shift from poor board responsibility in the past, however, came largely as protest against poor board practice. The statewide study indicates, on the basis especially of outdoor relief administration and the First Talbot Fund, that the poor boards are not likely to provide as efficient or inexpensive services as the present administrators. The record in handling the Talbot Fund, being recent, is perhaps the strongest argument advanced against turning over to the boards as now constituted any additional types of assistance. The arguments in favor of the transfer, conceded by the 1890 Poor Law Commission which nevertheless recommended county units, are overborne by the record of actual relief practices:

County unit poor districts have repeatedly been recommended as a solution, by special commissions and by the poor directors themselves. The present study shows that more adequate poor relief at lower cost is provided, on the whole, by county units than by the township and borough districts. Improvement might therefore be expected from such a changed organization of relief. Small governmental units are now under scrutiny by the taxpayer, from the standpoint of tax collection and general administrative cost, schools, and poor relief. Many township and borough poor directors favor county unit poor districts or county welfare boards. On the other hand the elimination of several hundred directors, not to mention the auditors and others paid by poor boards, the offices which produce the high cost of small districts, is bound to arouse some opposition.

The third proposal, county welfare boards to coordinate the various public relief services under a trained staff, is more far-reaching. After thorough discussion by members and others throughout the State interested in pub-

lic welfare, the Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania endorsed the principle in 1934 and later began an intensive educational program looking toward possible enabling legislation in 1935. Unpaid boards of seven members appointed by county commissioners, from a list of nominees prepared by nominators representing the commissioners and the Department of Welfare, were suggested. The proposal includes civil service for the staff, tending to assure qualified personnel and relative freedom from political influence. Such a single body administering all forms of public assistance with the county as the unit, or a combination of counties after the pattern of the areas in emergency unemployment relief, makes possible savings in administrative cost and a higher standard of service as compared with numerous small units.

The chief arguments offered against county welfare boards involve a distrust of centralized power and a preference for election as opposed to appointment. It is urged that members should be elected and thus made immediately responsible to the local citizens; as are the poor directors now, with results which have been described. It is also urged that such county boards with high-salaried staffs would be more expensive than the present administration by unpaid volunteers. Again the test is not the actual amount spent on salaries, but what the money buys. On a strictly dollar basis, however, the experience of the State Emergency Relief Board has shown that adding a qualified worker to the pay-roll may produce an actual reduction in total expenses because of the lowered relief load following proper investigation.

The problem of organizing public assistance is not confined to Pennsylvania. In view of the present public interest not only in larger governmental units as an economy measure, but also in social insurance, fundamental changes in the organization of public aid are not improbable. Practically all changes thus far proposed, whether as improvements or replacements of the present organization or poor relief, involve abolition of the township and borough system.



## Appendix A

### ADDITIONAL TABLES

(Reprinted from POOR RELIEF ADMINISTRATION IN  
PENNSYLVANIA, Pennsylvania Department of Welfare,  
Bulletin No. 61, 1934) .



TABLE 25

LOCATION, POPULATION, AREA, DATE OF ORIGIN, AND NUMBER AND REMUNERATION OF DIRECTORS OF PENNSYLVANIA'S 425 POOR DISTRICTS, WITH ALMSHOUSE LOCATIONS AND POPULATIONS, 1933

County and Poor District	Population of District (Census of 1930)	Area in Square Miles <sup>1</sup> (1930)	When Created	Number and Title of Poor Relief Administrators <sup>2</sup> (Legal)	Total Remuneration of Directors for year (1933) <sup>3</sup>	Almshouses	
						Location	Average Number of Inmates
Adams County	37,128	528	1817	3 Directors	\$900	Gettysburg	83
Allegheny County—							
*Pittsburgh Dept. of Public Welfare	669,817	701	1847	1 Dir. Welfare	5,000	Mayview	1,789
*County Poor District	704,333	24	1852	3 Directors	10,500	Woodville	1,391
*Armstrong County	79,298	653	<sup>a</sup>	3 Co. Com.	1,800	Kittanning	98
*Beaver County	149,062	429	<sup>b</sup>	3 Co. Com.	1,350	Beaver	257
*Bedford County	37,309	1,026	1841	3 Directors	900	Bedford	77
*Berks County	231,717	863	1824	3 Directors	4,500	Shillington	455
*Blair County	139,840	535	1848	3 Directors	3,000	Hollidaysburg	202
Bradford County	49,039	1,145	<sup>b</sup>	3 Co. Com.	1,500	Burlington	120
Bucks County	96,727	608	1807	3 Directors	1,500	Doylstown	177
Butler County	80,480	790	<sup>b</sup>	3 Co. Com.	1,800	Butler	132
Cambria County	203,146	717	1854	3 Directors	4,500	Ebensburg	340
Cameron County—							
Driftwood Borough	282		1872	2 Overseers	11		
Emporium Borough	2,929		1864	2 Overseers			
Gibson Township	374	94	<sup>a</sup>	2 Overseers			
Grove Township	380	78	<sup>a</sup>	2 Overseers	24		
Lumber Township	253	48	<sup>a</sup>	2 Overseers			
Portage Township	73	19	<sup>a</sup>	2 Overseers			
Shippert Township	1,014	162	<sup>a</sup>	2 Overseers	480		
Carbon County—							
Bowmantown Borough	843		<sup>a</sup>	2 Overseers			
East Penn Township	1,037	23	<sup>a</sup>	2 Overseers	135		
East Side Borough	197		1837	2 Overseers	50		
Franklin Township	2,257	15	<sup>a</sup>	2 Overseers	66		
Kidder Township	419	86	<sup>a</sup>	2 Overseers	300		
Lehighon Borough	6,490		1866	2 Overseers	130		
Lower Townmansing Township	1,623	22	<sup>a</sup>	2 Overseers	608		
Nahoning Township	2,464	25	<sup>a</sup>	2 Overseers	2,500		
*Middle Coal Field	106,231		1862	5 Directors		Weatherly	335
*Packer Township	511	41	<sup>a</sup>	2 Overseers	389		
Palmerton Borough	7,678		1912	2 Overseers	80		
Parryville Borough	553		1874	2 Overseers			

Penn Forest Township	302	76	4	2 Overseers	40	
Towamensing Township	869	30	4	2 Overseers	119	
Weissport Borough	661		1867	2 Overseers	30	
Centre County—						
Belleville Township	4,804		1806	2 Overseers	615	4
Benner Township	1,794	30		2 Overseers	150	
Boggs Township	1,327	57	4	2 Overseers	300	5
Burnside Township	24	102		2 Overseers	23	
Centre Hall Borough	658		1885	2 Overseers		
College Township	1,610	22	4	2 Overseers	70	
Curtin Township	715	37	4	2 Overseers	90	
*Ferguson Township	1,549	51	4	2 Overseers	100	
Gregg Township	1,300	48	4	2 Overseers	150	
Haines Township	1,018	57	4	2 Overseers	80	
*Halfmoon Township	389	24	4	2 Overseers	20	
Harris Township	809	32	4	2 Overseers	90	
Howard Borough	664		1864	2 Overseers	83	
Howard Township	606	19	4	2 Overseers	116	
Huston Township	560	26	4	2 Overseers	222	
Liberty Township	1,268	23	4	2 Overseers		
Marion Township	419	27	4	2 Overseers	45	
Miles Township	996	65		2 Overseers	72	10
Milesburg Borough	644		1843	2 Overseers	67	
Millheim Borough	659		1879	2 Overseers	56	
Patton Township	442	26	4	2 Overseers	48	
Penn Township	775	27	4	2 Overseers	110	
Phillipsburg Borough	3,600		1864	2 Overseers	600	5
Port Matilda Borough	1,284			2 Overseers	60	
Potter Township	3,969	56	4	2 Overseers	292	6
*Rush Township	520	157	1907	2 Overseers	50	
Snow Shoe Borough	2,050	88	4	2 Overseers	100	
Snow Shoe Township	480		1891	2 Overseers	24	7
South Phillipsburg Borough	3,583	28	4	2 Overseers	220	
*Spring Township	4,450		1886	2 Overseers		
State College Borough	371	30	4	2 Overseers	120	1
Taylor Township	577	48	4	2 Overseers	177	
*Union Township	304		1859	2 Overseers		
Unionville Borough	1,011	44	4	2 Overseers	125	
Walker Township	324	22	4	2 Overseers		
Worth Township	126,629	777	1798	3 Directors	\$2,250	169
*Chester County	34,531	601	5	3 Co. Com.	2,400	52
*Clarion County	86,727	1,142	5	3 Co. Com.	900	192
Clearfield County	32,319	878	1929	3 Co. Com.	2,400	17
Clinton County						
Columbia County—						
Beaver Township	895	36	1845	2 Overseers	102	
Benton Borough	733		1895	2 Overseers	21	
Benton Township	711	20	4	2 Overseers	30	

TABLE 25 (Continued)

LOCATION, POPULATION, AREA, DATE OF ORIGIN, AND NUMBER AND REMUNERATION OF DIRECTORS OF PENNSYLVANIA'S 425 POOR DISTRICTS, WITH ALMSHOUSE LOCATIONS AND POPULATIONS, 1933

County and Poor District	Population of District (Census of 1930)	Area in Square Miles <sup>1</sup> (1930)	When Created	Number and Title of Poor Relief Administrators <sup>2</sup> (Legal)	Total Remuneration of Directors for year (1933) <sup>3</sup>	Almshouses	
						Location	Average Number of Inmates
Berwick Borough	12,660	---	1818	2 Overseers	940	Bloomsburg	20
*Bloom Poor District	12,801	---	1869	3 Directors	990		
Briar Creek Borough	249	---	1917 <sup>4</sup>	2 Overseers	36		
Briar Creek Township	1,381	23	---	2 Overseers	140	Centralla	9
Catawissa Borough	2,023	---	1892	2 Overseers	90		
Catawissa Township	475	12	1786	2 Overseers	300		
*Centralla Borough and Conyngham Township	5,178	---	1869	3 Directors	2,967		
Cleveland Township	923	24	1893	2 Overseers	114		
Fishing Creek Township	935	28	1789	2 Overseers	49		
Franklin Township	493	13	1843	2 Overseers	30		
Franklin Township	908	18	1800	2 Overseers	114		
Hemlock Township	334	19	1839	2 Overseers	---		
Jackson Township	1,134	18	1853	2 Overseers	100		
Locust Township	751	35	1817	3 Directors	45	Suegerstown	128
Madison Township	531	16	1844	2 Overseers	61		
Main Township	1,218	19	1799	2 Overseers	251		
Mifflin Township	638	9	1837	2 Overseers	100		
Montour Township	574	17	1818	2 Overseers	40		
Mount Pleasant Township	598	---	1923	2 Overseers	120		
North Centre Township	338	13	1840	2 Overseers	36		
Orange Township	415	---	1900	2 Overseers	55		
Orangeville Borough	526	26	1853	2 Overseers	95		
Pine Township	523	21	1832	2 Overseers	15		
Roaring Creek Township	597	---	1921	2 Overseers	150	Suegerstown	131
South Centre Township	171	---	1849	2 Overseers	---		
Stillwater Borough	62,980	1,038	1851	3 Co. Com.	1,000		
Crawford County	68,236	---	1851	3 Directors	1,200		
*Cumberland County	165,231	522	1806	3 Directors	4,500		
Dauphin County	280,264	185	1804	3 Directors	3,556		
Delaware County	33,431	806	---	3 Co. Com.	900		
Elk County	175,277	781	1840	3 Directors	5,589		
*Erie County	196,542	796	1822	3 Directors	4,500		
*Fayette County	---	---	---	---	---	Unontown	285

Forest County	5,180	424	1807	3 Co. Com.	600	Tionesta	15
*Franklin County	66,010	751		3 Directors	1,200	Chambersburg	156
Fulton County—							
Ayr Township	1,350	44	1754	2 Overseers	96		
Belfast Township	778	42	1790	2 Overseers	30		
Bethel Township	766	34	1773	2 Overseers			
Brush Creek Township	518	51	1850	2 Overseers			
Brush Creek Township	718	34	1767	2 Overseers	39		
Dublin Township	957	41	1837	2 Overseers	27		
Licking Creek Township	763	12	1814	2 Overseers	20		
McConnellsburg Borough	863	33	1849	2 Overseers			
Taylor Township	725	31	1849	2 Overseers	16		
Thompson Township	655	31	1849	2 Overseers	51		
Todd Township	537	29	1864	2 Overseers			
Union Township	596	31	1849	2 Overseers			
Wells Township	596	31	1849	2 Overseers			
Greene County	41,767	574	1859	3 Directors	600	Waynesburg	104
*Huntingdon County	39,021	918	1850	3 Directors	900	Shirleysburg	61
*Indiana County	75,395	829	1850	3 Co. Com.	1,800	Indiana	156
*Jefferson County	52,114	666	1899	3 Co. Com.	900	Brookville	115
Junata County—							
Beale Township	553	21		2 Overseers	70		
Delaware Township	1,050	28		2 Overseers	80		
Fayette Township	1,504	40		2 Overseers	33		
Formanagh Township	1,076	31		2 Overseers			
Greenwood Township	394	18		2 Overseers	40		
Lack Township	782	64		2 Overseers	5		
Miffin Borough	913			2 Overseers	46		
Mifflintown Borough	1,027			2 Overseers	120		
Millford Township	1,194	36		2 Overseers	100		
Monroe Township	1,014	20		2 Overseers	20		
Port Royal Borough	579			2 Overseers	50		
Spruce Hill Township	583	23		2 Overseers			
Susquehanna Township	406	17		2 Overseers	104		
Thompstontown Borough	325			2 Overseers	27		
Turbett Township	520	16		2 Overseers	50		
Tuscarora Township	924	48		2 Overseers	77		
Walker Township	1,524	28		2 Overseers			
Lackawanna County—							
*Blakely Poor District	59,220		1861	3 Directors	4,500	Olyphant	126
*Carbondale City	20,061		1800	6 Directors	1,830	Carbondale	31
*Carbondale Township	1,877	11		2 Overseers	650		
*Clifton Township	217	18		2 Overseers	62		
*Covington Township	609	24		2 Overseers			
*Elmhurst Borough	841		1889	2 Overseers			
*Fell Township	5,710	15		2 Overseers	936		
Gouldsboro Borough	76		1863	2 Overseers			
*Jefferson Township	800	33		2 Overseers	40		

TABLE 25 (Continued)

LOCATION, POPULATION, AREA, DATE OF ORIGIN, AND NUMBER AND REMUNERATION OF DIRECTORS OF PENNSYLVANIA'S 425 POOR DISTRICTS, WITH ALMSHOUSE LOCATIONS AND POPULATIONS, 1933

County and Poor District	Population of District (Census of 1930)	Area in Square Miles <sup>1</sup> (1930)	When Created	Number and Title of Poor Relief Administrators <sup>2</sup> (Legal)	Total Remuneration of Directors for year (1933) <sup>3</sup>	Almshouses	
						Location	Average Number of Inmates
*Jenkins Township, Pittston Township	85,484		1857 <sup>4</sup>	5 Directors	1,875	Ransom	124
*Jermyon Borough	1,810			2 Overseers	300		
*Lakeview Poor District	13,855		1868 <sup>4</sup>	13 Directors	895	Clarks Summit	30
*Lehigh Township	109	21		2 Overseers	101		
*Madison Township	747	17		2 Overseers	120		
*Mayfield Borough	3,774			2 Overseers	4		
*Moscow Borough	8,892		1909 <sup>4</sup>	2 Overseers	80		
*Ransom Township	1,408	18		2 Overseers			
*Roaring Brook Township	268	23		7 Directors	10,469	Clarks Summit	315
*Scranton Poor District	161,221		1862 <sup>4</sup>	2 Overseers			
*Spring Brook Township	467	36		2 Overseers	70		
*Vandling Borough	1,169		1899	6 Directors	2,500	Lancaster	253
Lancaster County	196,882	941	1798	3 Co.. Com.	1,200	New Castle	157
Lawrence County	97,258	360	1925	3 Directors	1,200	Lebanon	202
*Lebanon County	67,103	360	1830	3 Directors	4,484	Wescosville	383
Lehigh County	172,893	344	1844	2 Overseers			
Luzerne County—							
Bear Creek Township	438	65	1856	2 Overseers	575		
Black Creek Township	2,429	24	1848	2 Overseers			
Buck Township	122	14	1833	2 Overseers	188		
*Butler Township	2,070	33	1859	8 Directors	12,000	Retreat	646
*Central Poor District	275,374		1860	2 Overseers			
*Conyngham Borough	522		1902	2 Overseers	459		
Conyngham Township	2,935	11	1875	2 Overseers	742		
*Dallas Borough	1,188		1879	2 Overseers	804		
*Dallas Township	1,829	20	1817	2 Overseers	40		
Dennison Township	751	33	1839	2 Overseers	59		
Dorrance Township	897	26	1840	2 Overseers	1,200		
*Exeter Borough	5,724		1884	2 Overseers	225		
*Exeter Township	859	13	1790	2 Overseers	41		
Fairmount Township	734	42	1834	2 Overseers	100		
*Fairview Township	1,050	11	1889	2 Overseers			



Franklin Township	561	13	1843	2 Overseers	300
Hollenback Township	550	16	1845	2 Overseers	77
*Hunlock Township	1,264	22	1877	2 Overseers	289
Huntington Township	1,352	29	1793	2 Overseers	102
*Jackson Township	870	13	1845	2 Overseers	40
*Lake Township	1,377	32	1841	2 Overseers	250
Lehman Township	1,283	25	1839	2 Overseers	130
*Nescopeck Borough	1,614	18	1896	2 Overseers	18
Nescopeck Township	672	18	1792	2 Overseers	186
New Columbus Borough	127		1850	2 Overseers	
*Nuangola Borough	241		1908	2 Overseers	
Rice Township	499		1928	2 Overseers	
Ross Township	1,076	43	1842	2 Overseers	142
*Salem Township	2,137	30	1790	2 Overseers	240
*Shickshinny Borough	2,451		1861	2 Overseers	300
Stocum Township	796	10	1854	2 Overseers	
Sugar Loaf Township	1,568	23	1809	2 Overseers	147
*Union Township	1,071	20	1813	2 Overseers	112
*West Pittston Borough	7,940		1857	2 Overseers	1,240
White Haven Borough	1,587		1842	2 Overseers	40
Wright Township	524	26	1851	2 Overseers	
Lycoming County—					
Anthony Township	413	16	1844	2 Overseers	30
Armstrong Township	294	27	1842	2 Overseers	
Eastress Township	216	8	1854	2 Overseers	50
*Brady Township	370	6	1856	2 Overseers	120
Brown Township	241	68	1815	2 Overseers	
*Cascade Township	377	33	1842	2 Overseers	80
*Clinton Township	1,356	26	1825	2 Overseers	175
Cogan House Township	516	71	1843	2 Overseers	18
Cummings Township	173	71	1832	2 Overseers	
DuBoistown Borough	1,049		1876	2 Overseers	39
*Eldred Township	564	18	1858	2 Overseers	6
*Fairfield Township	415	12	1825	2 Overseers	
Franklin Township	636	24	1821	2 Overseers	53
*Gamble Township	352	46	1875	2 Overseers	6
*Hepburn Township	694	16	1821	2 Overseers	130
*Hughesville Borough	1,888		1852	2 Overseers	
Jackson Township	1,329	34	1824	2 Overseers	743
*Jersey Shore Borough	5,781		1826	2 Overseers	43
Jordan Township	576	20	1854	2 Overseers	
Lewis Township	603	34	1835	2 Overseers	32
*Limestone Township	785	34	1835	2 Overseers	874
*Loyalsock Township	2,522	21	1786	2 Overseers	52
Lycoming Township	484	15	1785	2 Overseers	15
McHenry Township	269	73	1861	2 Overseers	125
*McIntyre Township	770	47	1848	2 Overseers	26
McNitt Township	483	40	1878	2 Overseers	

TABLE 25 (Continued)

LOCATION, POPULATION, AREA, DATE OF ORIGIN, AND NUMBER AND REMUNERATION OF DIRECTORS OF PENNSYLVANIA'S 425 POOR DISTRICTS, WITH ALMSHOUSE LOCATIONS AND POPULATIONS, 1933

County and Poor District	Population of District (Census of 1930)	Area in Square Miles <sup>1</sup> (1930)	When Created	Number and Title of Poor Relief Administrators <sup>2</sup> (Legal)	Total Remuneration of Directors for year (1933) <sup>3</sup>	Almshouses	
						Location	Average Number of Inmates
Mifflin Township	444	27	1803	2 Overseers	40		
Mill Creek Township	189	12	1879	2 Overseers	8		
*Montgomery Borough	1,903		1887	2 Overseers	474		
*Montoursville Borough	2,710		1850	2 Overseers	140		
Moreland Township	586	24	1813	2 Overseers	32		
*Muncy Borough	2,413		1827	2 Overseers	150		
*Muncy Creek Township	1,530		1797	2 Overseers	150		
Muncy Township	713	21	1772	2 Overseers	56		
Nippenose Township	491	14	1786	2 Overseers	104		
*Old Locoming Township	1,822	9	1858	2 Overseers	50		
Penn Township	525	27	1821	2 Overseers	43		
Platt Township	448	11	1858	2 Overseers	8		
Picture Rocks Borough	548		1875	2 Overseers	79		
Pine Township	364	76	1857	2 Overseers	22		
Punkett's Creek Township	193	49	1833	2 Overseers	153		
*Porter Township	1,063	7	1840	2 Overseers			
*Saladasburg Borough	227		1884	2 Overseers	10		
Shrewsbury Township	243	17	1804	2 Overseers	400		
*South Williamsport Borough	6,058		1886	2 Overseers			
Susquehanna Township	256	7	1838	2 Overseers	42		
*Upper Fairfield Township	464	18	1853	2 Overseers	80		
*Washington Township	633	53	1785	2 Overseers			
Watson Township	153	23	1845	2 Overseers			
*Williamsport City	45,729		1796	3 Overseers	2,700	Williamsport	83
Wolf Township	579	19	1834	2 Overseers	150		
*Woodward Township	941	11	1855	2 Overseers	60		
McKean County	55,167	987	1879	3 Co. Com.	1,800	Smethport	108
*Mercer County	99,246	700	1850	3 Directors	750	Mercer	120
Mifflin County	40,335	398	1850	3 Directors	600	Lewistown	77
Monroe County	23,296	623	1923	3 Co. Com.	2,400	Stroudsburg	67
Montgomery County	265,804	484	1806	3 Directors	4,500	Royersford	280
Montour County—							
Anthony Township	709	26	<sup>4</sup>	2 Overseers	5		
Cooper Township	286	7	<sup>4</sup>	2 Overseers	20	Danville	20
Danville-Mahoning	10,513		1854	3 Directors	691		

Deer Township	577	16	1	2 Overseers	92	
Liberty Township	731	29	4	2 Overseers	80	
Limestone Township	518	13	4	2 Overseers	107	
Mayberry Township	195	7	4	2 Overseers	30	
Valley Township	538	16	1867	3 Directors	74	Mausvale
Washingtonville Borough	182		1870	8 Burgess and council		
West Hemlock Township	208	8	1837	2 Overseers	25	
Northampton County	169,304	372		3 Directors	4,500	Nazareth
Northumberland County						
Delaware Township	1,528	29	1843	2 Overseers	238	
*East Cameron Township	1,065	11	1898	2 Overseers	160	
East Chillisquaque Twp.	521	8	1895	2 Overseers	5	
Geathart Township	439	4	1890	2 Overseers	24	
Herndon Borough	609			2 Overseers	20	
Jackson Township	731	12	1836	2 Overseers	88	
*Jordon Township	722	17	1852	2 Overseers	71	
Kulpmont Borough	6,120		1915	2 Overseers	2,189	
Lewis Township	860	26	1843	2 Overseers	90	
Little Mahanoy Township	404	11	1813	2 Overseers	72	
Lower Augusta Township	710	18		2 Overseers	74	
*Lower Mahanoy Township	1,347	20	1906	2 Overseers	164	
*Marion Heights Borough	2,001		1905	2 Overseers	341	
McDwensville Borough	210		1854	2 Overseers	5	
*Milton Borough	8,552		1821	2 Overseers	800	Milton
*Mount Carmel Borough	17,967		1869	2 Overseers	1,800	Reed Station, Crowl (P. O.)
*Mount Carmel Township	6,295	22	1854	2 Overseers	3,690	Northumberland
*Northumberland Borough	4,483		1828	2 Overseers	400	
Point Township	1,173	24	1786	2 Overseers	10	
*Ralpho Township	1,745	19	1833	2 Overseers	262	
*Riverside Borough	447		1871	2 Overseers	27	
Rockefeller Township	1,012	21	1880	2 Overseers	64	
Rush Township	911	27	1819	2 Overseers	49	
*Shamokin & Coal Township	40,203		1863	3 Overseers	3,060	Shamokin
*Shamokin Township	1,720	32	1799	2 Overseers	200	
Snydertown Borough	273		1871	2 Overseers	28	
*Sunbury City	15,626		1920	1 Overseer	750	Sunbury
Turbot Township	816	14	1772	2 Overseers	200	
Turbotville Borough	456		1859	2 Overseers	10	
Upper Augusta Township	1,317	20	1846	2 Overseers	50	
Upper Mahanoy Township	768	21	1906	2 Overseers	72	
Washington Township	687	18	1856	2 Overseers	73	
*Watontown Borough	2,248		1867	2 Overseers	379	Watontown
*West Cameron Township	535	10	1898	2 Overseers	193	
West Chillisquaque Twp.	1,073	14	1895	2 Overseers	215	
*Zerbe Township	2,790	13	1853	2 Overseers	1,400	Trevorton
Perry County	21,744	564	1824	3 Directors	900	Loysville
Philadelphia County						
Bristol Township	137,686	9	1823	4 Guardians	3,000	

TABLE 25 (Continued)

LOCATION, POPULATION, AREA, DATE OF ORIGIN, AND NUMBER AND REMUNERATION OF DIRECTORS OF PENNSYLVANIA'S 425 POOR DISTRICTS, WITH ALMSHOUSE LOCATIONS AND POPULATIONS, 1933

County and Poor District	Population of District (Census of 1930)	Area in Square Miles <sup>1</sup> (1930)	When Created	Number and Title of Poor Relief Administrators <sup>2</sup> (Legal)	Total Remuneration of Directors for year (1933) <sup>3</sup>	Almshouses	
						Location	Average Number of Inmates
Byberry	1,322	9	<sup>4</sup>	2 Overseers	25	Germentown	127
*Germentown Township	104,865	11	1809	9 Managers			
Moreland Township	796	5		2 Overseers		Holmesburg	95
Oxford & Lower Dublin District	138,718	29	1807	8 Directors	3,930	Shawmont	17
Roxborough	25,959	7	1833	3 Managers	1,500	Holmesburg	1,879
Phila. Dept. of Public Welfare	1,541,615	61	1854	1 Director	900		
Pike County	7,483	544	1925	3 Co. Com.	1,200	Coudersport	73
Potter County	17,489	1,071		3 Co. Com.	7,438	Schuylkill Haven	581
Schuylkill County	235,505	777	1831	3 Directors			
Snyder County							
Adams Township	572	19	7	2 Overseers			
Beaver Township	312	15	7	2 Overseers			
Beavertown Borough	604		7	2 Overseers	20		
Centre Township	810	22	7	2 Overseers			
Chapman Township	812	14	7	2 Overseers			
Franklin Township	1,161	24	7	2 Overseers			
Freeburg Borough	391		7	2 Overseers			
Jackson Township	621	14	7	2 Overseers	38		
Middleburg Borough	1,024		7	2 Overseers	159		
Middlecreek Township	755	14	7	2 Overseers			
Monroe Township	1,235	16	7	2 Overseers			
Penn Township	1,209	19	7	2 Overseers			
Perry Township	1,947	25	7	2 Overseers			
Selinsgrove Borough	2,797		7	2 Overseers			
Shamokin Dam Borough	738		7	2 Overseers	5		
Spring Township	1,062	33	7	2 Overseers			
Union Township	1,073	13	7	2 Overseers	25		
Washington Township	1,690	22	7	2 Overseers	100		
West Beaver Township	1,366	29	7	2 Overseers	14		
West Perry Township	667	32	7	2 Overseers	300		
Somerset County	80,764	1,034	1845	3 Directors	900	Somerset	113
Sullivan County	7,499	453	1925	3 Co. Com.			
Susquehanna County							
*Apolacon Township	169	22	<sup>4</sup>	2 Overseers	40		
Ararat Township	460	20	<sup>4</sup>	2 Overseers	14		



*Auburn and Rush Township	3,322	1870	3 Directors	190	Montrose	5
*Bridgewater Township	1,824	42	2 Overseers	81		
*Brooklyn Township	1,868	24	2 Overseers	76		
*Choconut Township	189	20	2 Overseers	23		
*Clifford Township	1,125	40	2 Overseers	84		
*Dimock Township	838	29	2 Overseers		Forest City	0
*Forest City Borough	5,209	23	2 Overseers	144		
*Franklin Township	74		2 Overseers			
*Friendville Borough	768	31	2 Overseers	5		
*Gibson Township	582		2 Overseers	76		
*Great Bend Borough	614	37	2 Overseers	50		
*Hallstead Borough	1,254		2 Overseers	164		
*Harford Township	1,042	32	2 Overseers	99		
*Harmony Township	537	30	2 Overseers	83		
*Herrick Township	605	24	2 Overseers	60		
*Hop Bottom Borough	354		2 Overseers			
*Jackson Township	553	27	2 Overseers	36		
*Jessup Township	478	21	2 Overseers	12		
*Lanesboro Borough	731		2 Overseers	26		
*Lathrop Township	593	21	2 Overseers	100		
*Lenox Township	546	41	2 Overseers	90		
*Liberty Township	546	30	2 Overseers	115		
*Little Meadows Borough	136		2 Overseers	28		
*Middletown Township	348	28	2 Overseers	10	Montrose	1
*Montrose Borough	1,909		2 Overseers	145		
*New Milford Borough	782		2 Overseers	50	New Milford	8
*New Milford Township	849	45	3 Directors	65		
*Silver Lake Township	872	32	2 Overseers	52		
*Susquehanna Depot and Oakland Township	4,697		3 Directors	325	Susquehanna	9
*Thompson Borough	321		2 Overseers			
*Thompson Township	363	22	2 Overseers	45		
*Uniondale Borough	331		2 Overseers			
*Union County	31,871	1,142	3 Co. Com.	2,325	Wellsboro	110
Union County—						
Buffalo Township	1,438	30	2 Overseers			
East Buffalo Township	1,291	16	2 Overseers	150		
Gregg Township	936	15	2 Overseers			
Hartleton Borough	169		2 Overseers	9		
Hartley Township	1,754	78	2 Overseers	147		
Kelly Township	1,426	17	2 Overseers	185		
Lewis Township	735	37	2 Overseers	50		
Lewistown Borough	3,308		2 Overseers	300		
Limestone Township	679	19	2 Overseers			
Midlinburg Borough	1,959		2 Overseers			
New Berlin Borough	459		2 Overseers	30		
Union Township	657	11	2 Overseers			
West Buffalo Township	773	39	2 Overseers	125		
White Deer Township	1,879	46	2 Overseers	150		



TABLE 25 (Continued)

LOCATION, POPULATION, AREA, DATE OF ORIGIN, AND NUMBER AND REMUNERATION OF DIRECTORS OF PENNSYLVANIA'S 425 POOR DISTRICTS, WITH ALMSHOUSE LOCATIONS AND POPULATIONS, 1933

County and Poor District	Population of District (Census of 1930)	Area in Square Miles <sup>1</sup> (1930)	When Created	Number and Title of Poor Relief Administrators <sup>2</sup> (Legal)	Total Remuneration of Directors for year (1933) <sup>3</sup>	Almshouses	
						Location	Average Number of Inmates
*Venango County	63,226	661	1870	3 Co. Com.	900	Franklin, R. D. 5	70
Warren County	41,453	902	1862	3 Co. Com.	2,400	Youngsville	110
*Washington County	204,802	862	1830	3 Directors	4,500	Washington	463
Wayne County—							
Berlin Township	975	38	4	2 Overseers	52		
Bethany Borough	146		4	2 Overseers	153		
Buckingham Township	580	44	4	2 Overseers	25		
Canaan Township	1,176	18	4	2 Overseers			
Cherry Ridge Township	442	20	4	2 Overseers	273		
Clinton Township	1,848	37	4	2 Overseers	144		
Danascus Township	1,876	84	4	2 Overseers	18		
Dreher Township	627	14	4	2 Overseers	59		
Dyberry Township	700	23	4	2 Overseers	110		
Hawley Borough	1,811		1892				
Honesdale Borough and Texas Township	6,849		1862	3 Directors	250	Honesdale	11
Lake Township	1,418	29	4	2 Overseers	40		
Lebanon Township	368	39	4	2 Overseers	12		
Lehigh Township	508	11	4	2 Overseers	18		
Manchester Township	680	49	4	2 Overseers	169		
Mount Pleasant Township	1,366	56	4	2 Overseers	10		
Oregon Township	337	17	4	2 Overseers	95		
Palmyra Township	562	16	4	2 Overseers	13		
Paupack Township	384	30	4	2 Overseers	137		
Preston Township	1,124	52	4	2 Overseers	20		
Prompton Borough	186		1844	2 Overseers	33		
Salem Township	1,211	32	4	2 Overseers	61		
Scott Township	478	45	4	2 Overseers			
South Canaan Township	1,021	28	4	2 Overseers			
Starrucca Borough	1,851		4	2 Overseers	38		
Sterling Township	544		4	2 Overseers	61		
Waymart Borough	902	26	1851	2 Overseers			

Westmoreland County	294,886	1,039	1849	3 Directors	4,433	Greensburg	423
Wyoming County	15,617	397	1925	3 Co. Com.	900	York	242
York County	167,135	903	1804	3 Directors	4,009		
Total	9,631,350			967	\$233,565		16,176

# Districts included in study of financial administration.

- <sup>1</sup> Information on area of borough poor districts not available.
- <sup>2</sup> Tenure of office four years except in the following poor districts: Williamsport City—1 year; Erie, Honesdale Texas (Wayne County), Blakely and Scranton (Lackawanna County)—3 years; Middle Coal Field and Central Poor Districts (in Carbon and Luzerne Counties)—5 years; and Germantown (Philadelphia County)—6 years.
- Directors and overseers are elected in all districts except the following where they are appointed: Williamsport City; Honesdale-Texas; Blakely, Pittston-Jenkins, Jermyn Borough and Scranton (all in Lackawanna County); Middle Coal Field; Central Poor District; Erie County, Sunbury City; Philadelphia and Pittsburgh Departments of Public Welfare.
- <sup>3</sup> Includes only salaries, where salaries are given; and commissions of directors, where there is no provision for salary.
- <sup>4</sup> Date of origin of district not known, but district exists by virtue of the act of 1771, P. L. 332, providing for two overseers in each borough and township.
- <sup>5</sup> Date of origin of district not known, but county unit was created under provisions of General Act of 1879, P. L. 78.
- <sup>6</sup> Date of origin of district not known, but county unit was created under provisions of the General Act of 1921, P. L. 538.
- <sup>7</sup> Juniata, Snyder and Union Counties, prior to the General Act of 1925, P. L. 762, had borough and township overseers. County unit districts, with county commissioners as directors of the poor, were created under the Act of 1925, but by the Act of 1931, P. L. 181, all three counties returned to the township and borough system.

TABLE 26

POOR RELIEF EXPENDITURES REPORTED BY POOR BOARDS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF WELFARE, 1933  
BY DISTRICTS AND FUNCTIONS

County and District	Expenditures Other Than Almshouse										Almshouse Administration plus Operation		Outside and Almshouse Administration and Almshouse Operation					
	Current Almshouse Expenditures (Excluding extraordinary expenditures)		Family Home Relief		Children in Family Homes and Institutions for Dependents		Payments to other Institutions (Mental, Medical, etc.)		Administration (Including Poor Board Office Expenses)		Per Cent of current poor relief expenditures							
	Amount	Per Cent of current poor relief expenditures	Amount	Per Cent of current poor relief expenditures	Amount	Per Cent of current poor relief expenditures	Amount	Per Cent of current poor relief expenditures	Amount	Per Cent of current poor relief expenditures								
All Poor Relief Expenditures (Including extraordinary expenditures)	Current Poor Relief Expenditures (Excluding extraordinary expenditures)	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
Adams Co.	\$22,910	\$22,910	\$7,613	33.2	\$15,297	66.8	\$3,000	13.1	\$275	1.2	\$1,922	8.4	\$2,416	31.7	\$11,018	72.0	\$13,434	58.6
Allegheny Co.	400,127	399,316	95,907	24.0	303,409	76.0	25,928	6.5			11,595	2.9	58,384	60.9	205,619	67.8	264,003	66.1
City of Pgh.	1,229,061	1,228,490	878,440	71.5	351,050	28.5	766,827	62.4			16,756	1.4	94,847	10.8	235,080	67.0	329,927	26.8
Outside Pgh.	90,067	88,840	63,227	71.2	25,613	28.8	24,241	27.8	1,145	1.3	33,837	38.1	4,004	6.3	14,709	57.4	18,713	21.1
Armstrong Co.	233,851	233,851	192,269	82.2	41,582	17.8	33,061	14.2	82,120	18.7	120,527	51.5	6,561	3.4	22,560	54.3	29,121	12.5
Beaver Co.	28,960	28,960	16,032	55.4	12,928	44.6	8,241	28.5			1,637	5.7	6,154	38.4	10,155	78.6	16,309	56.3
Bedford Co.	208,080	208,080	158,833	76.3	49,247	23.7	140,106	67.3	722	.8	5,181	2.5	12,824	8.1	32,197	65.4	45,021	21.7
Blair Co.	646,059	646,059	549,438	85.0	96,623	15.0	413,637	64.0	31,152	4.8	84,550	13.1	20,097	3.6	58,577	60.6	78,674	12.2
Berks Co.	172,751	172,751	144,735	83.8	28,016	16.2	94,380	54.6	21,190	12.3	24,416	14.1	4,749	3.3	21,023	75.0	25,772	15.0
Bradford Co.	60,570	60,570	29,325	48.4	31,242	51.6	15,869	26.2	15,869	26.2	1,218	2.0	12,241	41.7	20,766	66.5	33,007	54.5
Bucks Co.	170,692	170,692	105,761	62.0	64,931	38.0	60,514	35.5	5,504	3.2	36,743	21.5	3,000	2.8	50,687	78.1	53,687	31.5
Butler Co.	103,832	103,832	56,485	54.4	47,344	45.6	18,902	18.2			15,848	15.3	21,738	38.5	36,385	76.9	58,123	56.0
Cambria Co.																		
Cameron Co.	11,520	8,925	8,925	100.0			5,200	58.3	40	.5	2,770	31.0	915	10.2			915	10.2
Ind. P.D.																		
Carbon Co.	43,721	41,802	41,802	100.0			24,508	58.6			12,721	30.4	4,575	11.0			4,575	11.0
Ind. P.D.	235,471	189,423	125,770	66.4			59,175	31.3	9,735	5.1	42,816	22.6	14,044	11.2	45,337	75.9	62,381	32.9
Middle Coal Field																		

County and District





TABLE 26 (Continued)

POOR RELIEF EXPENDITURES REPORTED BY POOR BOARDS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF WELFARE, 1933<sup>1</sup>  
BY DISTRICTS AND FUNCTIONS

County and District	Expenditures Other Than Almshouse										Almshouse Administration plus Operation		Outside and Almshouse Administration and Almshouse Operation					
	Expenditures Other than Almshouse (Excluding extraordinary expenditures)		Current Almshouse Expenditures (Excluding extraordinary expenditures)		Family Home Relief		Children in Family Homes and Institutions for Dependents		Payments to other Institutions (Mental, Medical, etc.)		Administration Board Office Expenses)		Almshouse Administration plus Operation		Outside and Almshouse Administration and Almshouse Operation			
	Amount	Per Cent of current poor relief expenditures	Amount	Per Cent of current poor relief expenditures	Amount	Per Cent of current poor relief expenditures	Amount	Per Cent of current poor relief expenditures	Amount	Per Cent of current poor relief expenditures	Amount	Per Cent of current poor relief expenditures	Amount	Per Cent of current poor relief expenditures	Amount	Per Cent of current poor relief expenditures		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Lycoming Co. Williamsport City	105,665	84,843	36,969	78.9	17,874	21.1	39,930	47.1	2,973	3.5	16,831	19.3	7,235	10.8	10,256	57.4	17,494	20.6
51 Ind. P.D.	64,094	31,391	61,891	100.0			35,221	57.4	2,562	4.1	13,977	22.8	9,631	15.7			9,631	15.7
McKean Co. Home	139,873	139,873	124,051	88.7			50,623	36.2	14,714	10.5	34,853	24.9	23,858	19.2	10,683	67.5	34,541	24.7
Mercer Co.	220,281	219,470	196,512	89.5			147,035	67.0	4,467	2.0	8,222	3.7	36,788	15.7	18,048	78.6	54,836	25.0
Mifflin Co.	113,675	64,881	53,789	82.9			20,835	32.1	10,611	16.4	16,514	25.4	5,829	10.9	8,187	73.8	14,016	21.6
Monroe Co.	69,795	69,795	50,069	71.7			25,633	36.7	3,782	5.4	15,524	22.2	5,130	10.2	15,708	79.6	20,838	29.9
Montgomery Co.	245,038	235,221	193,315	82.4			77,647	33.0	18,771	8.0	84,877	36.1	12,520	6.5	33,110	80.0	45,630	19.4
Montour Co.																		
Danville and Mahoning Valley Twp.	24,249	17,249	11,395	69.0			2,299	13.3	264	1.5	7,339	42.6	1,993	16.8	4,838	90.4	6,831	39.6
Liberty Twp.	739	739	687	90.8			150	20.3			300	40.5	274	32.6	72	100.0	289	39.4
7 Ind. P.D.	1,146	1,146	553	100.0			553	48.3			319	27.8	624	23.9			274	23.9
Northampton Co.	2,765	2,765	2,758	100.0			1,361	49.4	125	4.5	648	23.5	73,395	22.6			624	23.6
Northampton Co.	379,882	379,612	300,842	79.2			184,934	48.7	29,528	7.8	73,395	19.3	12,985	4.3	44,340	56.3	57,325	15.1
Northumberland Co.																		
Milton	9,150	9,150	6,501	71.1			1,084	11.8	427	4.7	3,009	32.9	1,981	30.5	1,078	40.7	3,059	33.4
Mt. Carmel	28,294	28,294	23,338	82.5			19,215	67.9					4,123	17.7	2,673	53.9	6,796	24.0
Northumberland	4,129	4,129	5,701	89.6			2,150	52.1			1,137	27.5		11.2	174	40.7	588	14.2



Shamokin and Coal	234,300	234,300	138,306	59.0	95,994	41.0	69,776	29.8	112	.1	26,398	11.2	42,020	30.4	86,463	90.1	129,533	54.8
Sunbury	37,408	25,909	20,589	79.3	5,370	20.7	11,746	45.3	112	3.1	6,734	26.0	2,059	10.0	2,994	55.8	5,063	19.5
Watson town	8,623	3,623	2,743	75.7	880	24.3	1,528	42.2	112	3.1	648	17.9	455	16.6	1,600	18.2	615	16.9
Zerbe	14,118	12,397	12,397	87.8	1,721	12.2	10,277	72.8	6,187	7.4	100	.7	2,020	16.3	1,631	94.8	3,651	25.9
29 Ind. P.D.	91,444	83,609	83,609	100.0	8,065	58.1	46,082	55.1	6,884	4.9	13,645	16.3	17,695	21.2	5,120	63.5	17,695	21.2
Perry Co.	13,886	13,886	5,821	41.9	2,391	58.1	2,391	17.2	684	4.9	986	7.1	1,760	30.2	5,120	63.5	6,880	49.5
Philadelphia Co.	170,275	170,275	144,539	84.9	25,736	15.1	44,882	26.4	4,638	2.7	53,224	31.3	41,695	28.9	17,573	68.3	59,268	34.9
Germantown	161,505	116,590	90,784	77.9	25,806	22.1	31,873	27.4	2,095	1.8	32,541	27.9	24,275	26.8	18,630	72.2	42,905	36.8
Dublin	13,805	12,905	7,128	55.2	5,777	44.8	1,987	10.7	2,095	1.8	3,673	23.5	2,068	29.0	3,853	66.7	5,921	45.9
Roxborough	806,730	806,730	528,044	65.4	278,686	34.6	10,003	1.2	254,084	31.6	224,993	27.9	38,084	7.2	179,910	64.6	217,974	27.0
Dept. of Public Welfare	179	179	179	100.0	179	100.0	125	69.6	265	.3	9,345	9.5	54	30.1	---	---	54	30.4
Byberry	111,547	98,580	98,580	100.0	---	---	68,697	64.5	265	.3	9,345	9.5	25,878	25.7	---	---	25,878	25.7
Bristol	288	288	288	100.0	---	---	288	82.7	---	---	---	---	50	17.3	---	---	50	17.3
Moreland Twp.	17,077	17,077	17,077	100.0	---	---	8,459	49.5	1,171	6.9	5,158	30.2	2,289	13.4	15,188	76.7	2,289	13.4
Pike Co.	61,092	44,092	24,239	55.1	19,803	44.9	6,153	14.0	2,659	6.7	10,034	22.8	5,113	21.0	---	---	20,301	46.0
Potter Co.	333,968	298,691	150,852	50.5	147,839	49.5	119,820	40.1	7,655	2.6	3,374	1.1	20,603	13.3	113,548	76.8	133,551	44.7
Schuylkill Co.	31,493	31,493	31,493	100.0	---	---	21,866	69.7	707	2.2	6,079	19.4	2,739	8.7	---	---	2,739	8.7
Snyder Co.	56,489	54,632	36,971	67.7	17,661	32.3	26,362	48.2	4,537	8.3	2,715	5.0	8,357	9.1	13,010	73.7	16,367	90.0
Somerset Co.	18,257	18,257	18,257	100.0	---	---	12,309	67.4	96	.5	4,158	22.8	1,694	9.3	---	---	1,694	9.3
Sullivan Co.	9,352	9,352	2,307	25.3	6,814	74.7	331	3.6	---	---	1,266	13.9	710	30.8	5,982	87.9	6,702	73.5
Susquehanna Co.	10,835	9,435	8,241	87.3	1,193	12.7	3,222	34.2	465	5.2	1,730	18.3	2,794	33.9	1,108	92.9	3,902	41.4
Auburn and Rush	3,375	3,375	2,876	85.2	499	14.8	2,087	61.2	---	---	580	17.5	219	7.6	2,588	54.3	490	14.5
Forest City Boro.	4,210	4,210	962	22.8	3,248	77.2	353	8.3	---	---	---	---	609	63.3	---	79.7	3,197	76.9
Montrose	8,963	8,963	5,050	56.3	3,913	43.7	971	10.8	182	1.5	2,259	25.3	1,678	33.2	1,738	44.4	3,416	38.1
New Milford Twp.	25,513	24,029	24,029	100.0	---	---	12,617	52.5	1,531	6.4	5,984	24.9	3,897	16.2	---	---	3,897	16.2
Susquehanna and Oakland	55,063	55,063	36,319	65.9	18,764	34.1	10,577	19.2	10,048	18.2	12,046	21.9	3,648	10.0	12,192	65.0	15,840	28.8
30 Ind. P.D.	42,319	39,159	39,159	100.0	---	---	27,631	70.5	641	1.6	7,516	19.2	3,401	8.7	---	---	3,401	8.7
Tioga Co.	124,669	80,765	64,400	79.7	16,365	20.3	10,164	12.6	21,519	26.6	31,844	39.6	1,873	2.1	12,114	78.3	13,487	16.7
Union Co.	91,689	88,870	53,001	59.6	35,869	40.4	18,772	30.4	3,273	8.7	26,315	28.8	4,641	8.8	26,283	73.3	30,924	34.8
14 Ind. P.D.	272,267	272,267	215,766	79.3	56,501	20.7	82,688	30.4	33,707	12.4	84,023	30.9	15,338	7.1	31,219	55.3	46,557	17.1
Venango Co.	10,939	10,939	5,741	52.5	5,198	47.5	2,523	23.1	---	---	2,812	25.7	406	7.0	5,198	100.0	5,604	51.2
Warren Co.	27,038	26,197	26,194	100.0	---	---	12,447	47.5	170	.7	10,358	39.5	3,219	12.3	---	---	3,219	12.3
Washington Co.	284,929	284,929	188,391	69.6	86,538	30.4	12,324	4.3	50,966	17.9	119,230	41.8	15,881	8.0	46,658	53.9	62,539	21.9
Wayne Co.	32,262	32,262	32,262	100.0	---	---	24,896	75.3	1,800	5.4	2,866	9.1	2,570	10.2	---	---	2,570	10.2
Honesdale and Texas	313,409	250,719	174,643	69.7	76,076	30.3	117,214	46.8	3,600	1.4	48,686	19.4	5,143	2.9	59,303	78.0	64,446	25.7
26 Ind. P.D.	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Westmoreland Co.	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Wyoming Co.	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
York Co.	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Total	\$13,351,461	\$12,070,213	\$8,770,096	72.6	\$3,300,117	27.3	\$4,504,184	37.3	\$951,942	7.9	\$2,102,876	17.4	\$1,211,094	13.8	\$2,290,916	69.4	\$3,502,010	29.0

TABLE 27

## ANALYSIS OF POOR BOARD EXPENDITURES FROM THE "FIRST TALBOT FUND"

## BY COUNTIES

Amounts and analysis of expenditures are based on reports of the State Auditor General, made in accordance with Section 4 of the Act of April 9, 1929, P. L. 343, relating to audits of agencies receiving State aid.

The "First Talbot Fund," amounting to \$10,000,000, was appropriated as "State aid to political subdivisions charged by law with the care of the poor" under the Act of December 28, 1931, P. L. 1503, commonly known as the First Talbot Act.<sup>20</sup>

Section 4 specified: Each political subdivision... shall have authority... to expend the moneys received from the appropriation made by this act for the purpose of providing food, clothing, fuel and shelter for residents within their districts who are without means of support. In no case shall any of said appropriation be used for paying cash, commonly known as a 'dole,' to persons entitled to relief.

County	Expenditures for Food, Clothing, Fuel and Shelter		Expenditures for Items, Services or Purposes Not Within Scope or Intent of Act		Balance on Hand at Date of Audit 1		Analysis of Expenditures for Items, Services or Purposes not within Scope or Intent of Act			
	Amount	Per Cent*	Amount	Per Cent*	Amount	Per Cent*	Item	Amount	Item	Amount
Adams 2	\$19,873.60	74.9			\$6,649.03	25.1				
Allegheny	1,579,240.72	99.5	\$5,200.04 3	.3	8,985.02	.9	Allegheny County Home	\$5,200.04		
Armstrong 4	54,853.12 5	75.6	2,323.40	3.2	15,331.60	21.2	Bills incurred prior to Act	2,300.00		
							Medical services	23.40		
							Total	2,323.40		
Beaver	155,610.37	87.1	23,137.06	12.9			Administration expense	150.00	Ice	\$3.31
							Water	603.33	Drugs and medicine	1,193.90
							Electric	824.89	Board payments to children's	
							Stoves	290.61	institutions and foster homes	20,059.53
							Stove repairs	6.49	Total	23,137.06
Bedford	20,077.40	92.6			1,599.92	7.4				
Berks	246,235.74 6	100.0			510.60	.4				
Blair	127,345.06	99.6								

Bradford	30,834.02	100.0																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																												</
----------	-----------	-------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	----

TABLE 27 (Continued)

ANALYSIS OF POOR BOARD EXPENDITURES FROM THE "FIRST TALBOT FUND"

BY COUNTIES

Amounts and analysis of expenditures are based on reports of the State Auditor General, made in accordance with Section 4 of the Act of April 9, 1929, P. L. 343, relating to audits of agencies receiving State aid. The "First Talbot Fund," amounting to \$10,000,000, was appropriated as "State aid to political subdivisions charged by law with the care of the poor" under the Act of December 28, 1931, P. L. 1503, commonly known as the First Talbot Act.<sup>20</sup> Section 4 specified: Each political subdivision... shall have authority... to expend the moneys received from the appropriation made by this act for the purpose of providing food, clothing, fuel and shelter for residents within their districts who are without means of support. In no case shall any of said appropriation be used for paying cash, commonly known as a 'dole,' to persons entitled to relief.

County	Expenditures for Food, Clothing, Fuel and Shelter		Expenditures for Items, Services or Purposes Not Within Scope or Intent of Act		Balance on Hand at Date of Audit <sup>1</sup>		Analysis of Expenditures for Items, Services or Purposes not within Scope or Intent of Act			
	Amount	Per Cent*	Amount	Per Cent*	Amount	Per Cent*	Item	Amount	Item	Amount
Crawford <sup>10</sup>	47,460.97	94.9	2,566.76	5.1			Grocery invoices prior to Act	80.77	Printing	5.25
							Administration salaries	2,330.74	Total	2,566.76
							Drayage and storage on A. R. C. flour	150.00		
Cumberland	44,067.47	77.7	10,023.58	17.7	2,638.80	4.6	Taxes	436.00	Alimony	75.00
							Light	18.00	Ice	4.00
							Gas	22.00	Drugs	3.50
							Water	13.00	Lodge dues	2.00
							Personal note	9.50	Laundry	4.00
							Interest on mortgage	53.50	Cash in wages for road work	9,383.08
								Total		10,023.58
Dauphin	144,985.87	87.8	20,081.04	12.2			Cash disbursed by Red Cross	239.19	Items duplicated in statements	576.67
							Cash for work	17,930.69	Total	20,081.04
							Cash for unemployed persons	1,334.49		







TABLE 27 (Continued)

## ANALYSIS OF POOR BOARD EXPENDITURES FROM THE "FIRST TALBOT FUND"

## BY COUNTIES

Amounts and analysis of expenditures are based on reports of the State Auditor General, made in accordance with Section 4 of the Act of April 9, 1929, P. L. 343, relating to audits of agencies receiving State aid.

The "First Talbot Fund," amounting to \$10,000,000, was appropriated as "State aid to political subdivisions charged by law with the care of the poor" under the Act of December 28, 1931, P. L. 1503, commonly known as the First Talbot Act.<sup>20</sup>

Section 4 specified: Each political subdivision... shall have authority... to expend the moneys received from the appropriation made by this act for the purpose of providing food, clothing, fuel and shelter for residents within their districts who are without means of support. In no case shall any of said appropriation be used for paying cash, commonly known as a 'dole,' to persons entitled to relief.

County	Expenditures for Food, Clothing, Fuel and Shelter		Expenditures for Items, Services or Purposes Not Within Scope or Intent of Act		Balance on Hand at Date of Audit <sup>1</sup>		Analysis of Expenditures for Items, Services or Purposes not within Scope or Intent of Act			
	Amount	Per Cent*	Amount	Per Cent*	Amount	Per Cent*	Item	Amount	Item	Amount
Lawrence	102,684.02	100.0								75.00
Lebanon	67,928.09	100.0								52.00
Lehigh	187,630.40	100.0								4.48
Luzerne <sup>9 10 13</sup>	411,764.37 <sup>14</sup>	98.7	5,576.00	1.3	108.21		Payments for institutional patients	567.56	Burial	
							Cash payments	173.93	Medical aid	
							Unidentified payments	4,623.27	Commission	
							Payments to other poor districts		Check tax	
								68.50	Flour (trucking)	
									Total	5,576.00
Lycoming <sup>9 10 13</sup>	81,825.10	94.6	4,253.41	4.9	373.87	.5	Cash paid to overseers, unexplained	4,253.41		
Mckean	53,416.17	96.4	1,865.23	3.4	97.23	.2	Bills incurred in 1931	1,611.00	County treas.—commission	226.73
Mercer	105,442.86	100.0					Transportation	17.00		
							Overpayment	10.50	Total	1,865.23

Mifflin	34,747.68	93.3	2,437.93	6.7				Playing small gardens Office supplies Telephone Electric bill Burlap bags Gasoline and oil	275.50 245.07 36.37 49.14 54.03 48.80	Petty cash Miscellaneous Salaries Hauling Total	85.00 21.17 1,410.35 262.50 2,487.83
Monroe	24,546.91	99.9			15.33	.1		Stamps and stamped envelopes Travelling and telephone ex- penses Salaries Printing and stationery	42.25 1,211.48 3,797.50 381.07	Ledger cards Bond premium (treas.) Solicitors fee Total	244.25 300.00 13.70 5,989.25
Montgomery	268,436.73	97.2	5,989.25	2.2	1,605.99	.6		Cash payments to recipients Cartage Physician's fees Administration expenses	443.44 5.00 38.00 89.25	Relief grant to recipient with means of support Relief granted to overseer Total	23.00 23.11 631.86
Montour 4 10 Northampton 4	9,317.12 188,021.71	99.7 100.0			24.34	.3		Payments to merchants with out supporting bills or orders	819.97		
Northumberland 4 10 18	117,122.19	96.9	631.86	.5	3,129.73	2.6		County treasurer, commission	145.59		
Perry 2	10,680.90	92.9	819.97	7.1				Cash paid to applicants in lieu of orders	321.00	County treas. commission Total	178.07 499.97
Philadelphia	2,428,759.78	100.0			56.33			Mileage, delinquent taxes, burials, legal services, medi- cal expenses, barber expen- ses, office supplies	519.31		
Pike 7	1,398.61	24.4	145.59	2.5	4,191.31	73.1		Physician's fees	26.50		
Potter 4 10	8,404.54	94.4	499.07	5.6				County treasurer, commission	140.60		
Schuykill	257,150.84 16	99.0			2,527.39	1.0					
Snyder 2 7	14,010.41	96.4	519.31	3.6							
Somerset	66,234.52	100.0	26.50								
Sullivan	4,693.89 16	89.5	140.60	2.7	406.97	7.8					

**TABLE 27 (Continued)**  
**ANALYSIS OF POOR BOARD EXPENDITURES FROM THE "FIRST TALBOT FUND"**  
**BY COUNTIES**

Amounts and analysis of expenditures are based on reports of the State Auditor General, made in accordance with Section 4 of the Act of April 9, 1929, P. L. 343, relating to audits of agencies receiving State aid. The "First Talbot Fund," amounting to \$10,000,000, was appropriated as "State aid to political subdivisions charged by law with the care of the poor," under the Act of December 28, 1931, P. L. 1503, commonly known as the First Talbot Act.<sup>30</sup> Section 4 specified: Each political subdivision...shall have authority...to expend the moneys received from the appropriation made by this act for the purpose of providing food, clothing, fuel and shelter for residents within their districts who are without means of support. In no case shall any of said appropriation be used for paying cash, commonly known as a 'dole,' to persons entitled to relief.

County	Expenditures for Food, Clothing, Fuel and Shelter		Expenditures for Items, Services or Purposes Not Within Scope or Intent of Act		Balance on Hand at Date of Audit <sup>1</sup>		Analysis of Expenditures for Items, Services or Purposes not within Scope or Intent of Act			
	Amount	Per Cent*	Amount	Per Cent*	Amount	Per Cent*	Item	Amount	Item	Amount
Susquehanna	21,419.09	94.5	990.72	4.0	2,628.85	1.5	Doctor's bills Labor Moving Care of patients Mothers' Assistance	325.22 208.85 38.00 227.66 20.00	Burial expenses Taxes on overseer's personal property Same overseer's personal relief Total	75.00 69.51 28.48 990.72
Tioga	14,402.04	100.0								
Union <sup>4 7</sup>	10,543.89 <sup>17</sup>	100.0								
Venango	61,145.59	100.0								
Warren <sup>4</sup>	38,031.14	100.0								
Washington	213,804.76	99.8	434.60	.2			Printing of forms Equipment Rental of land Stakes and twine Hospital bill	177.50 66.47 40.00 20.23 23.00	Medicine Medical services Office supplies Transportation Total	13.65 7.50 6.45 79.80 434.60

Wayne -----	14,222.70	84.5	1,010.10	6.0	1,607.56	9.5	Nursing and medical services Travelling expenses ----- Board for indigents ----- Labor and hardware supplies -----	213.00 25.74 553.82 49.86	Hauling and moving ----- Medicine ----- Total -----	83.73 81.96 1,010.10
Westmoreland Wyoming 4 10 2 -----	299,107.11 9,061.12 18	100.0 100.0								
York 10 -----	166,258.85	100.0	77.25				Unlocated recipients of relief Drugs ----- Total -----	60.50 16.75 77.25		
Total 19 -----	\$9,744,506.17	97.1	\$166,694.75	1.6	\$126,392.96	1.2				

\* Refers to per cent of total county allocation and interest and transfers from poor funds in a few districts where such items were included in the Talbot Fund account. Percentages less than one tenth of one per cent have been omitted. In each instance the sum of the amounts given represents 100 per cent.

- 1 Audits were made by representatives of the State Auditor General on dates ranging from December 5, 1932 (Jefferson County) to May 7, 1934 (Westmoreland County).
- 2 Audits were made in 57 counties during 1933.
- 3 Records not sufficiently complete to permit analysis of all disbursements.
- 4 Interest to unknown amount earned on daily balance of Pittsburgh allocation from Talbot funds was credited to City of Pittsburgh general account.
- 5 No separate records of Talbot Fund and general county or poor fund expenditures; complete analysis of disbursements not possible.
- 6 Includes numerous expenditures for questionable items, such as tooth paste, paint, tobacco, batteries, tub, pall and cold cream.
- 7 Includes numerous expenditures for questionable items, such as shrimp, roe, pickles, fancy cakes, ginger ale, bird seed, malt, clothesline, fancy meats, fancy toilet soaps, shoe and stove polish.
- 8 No written orders available for examination.
- 9 Vouchers supporting payment of loan showed no analysis of disposition.
- 10 Numerous records reported as destroyed or mislaid.
- 11 Merchants' bills paid without supporting invoices or without supporting orders.
- 12 Includes numerous expenditures for questionable items, such as cigarettes, playing cards, magazines, stationery, ink, shotgun shells, bulbs, batteries, carbide, hair cuts, candy and drugs; also physicians' fees, ambulance hire, express charges and printing expenses.
- 13 Includes payment for work performed by recipients on township roads.
- 14 Records of expenditures wholly lacking in several districts.
- 15 In one district (Jenkins Township, Pittston City, Pittston Township) face amount of orders was paid despite fact that value of food given was less than face amount.
- 16 Includes numerous expenditures for questionable items, such as fancy cuts of meat, pies, and cakes, pickles, cigarettes, stove and shoe polish, hardware, tooth paste, candy, toothpicks, and razor blades.
- 17 Includes numerous expenditures for questionable items, such as fire crackers, drugs, cement, malt, ribbon, towels, dishes and other household articles.
- 18 Expended, along with poor funds, for regular poor district expenditures, including burials, legal fees and payments to State institutions. "It was noted that the unemployed received no benefit from these (Talbot) relief funds."
- 19 Cash disbursement book for Talbot funds very carelessly maintained, with numerous discrepancies apparent. Among items classified as "food" were maternity fees, medical service, moving and funeral expense, telephone charges, labor charges, glass, putty, paint, nails, curtains and dishes.
- 20 The sum of the total expenditures and balances shown is \$7,690.88 more than the \$10,000,000.00 appropriated under the First Talbot Act. The amount represents \$6,091.47 interest earned on deposits in a few districts and \$31,569.41 transferred from poor funds to meet obligations in excess of Talbot Fund allocations.
- 21 For discussion of First Talbot Fund administration by poor boards see Part II, Section A, Chapter 3.





## Appendix B

### Summary of Schedules and Questionnaires Used in State-wide Study

#### QUESTIONNAIRE TO SOLICITORS OF POOR DISTRICTS

Acts of Assembly under which district created and operating  
Limitations on kinds and amounts of relief  
Sections of General Poor Relief Act of 1925 not applying to district  
Court decisions involving district  
Selection of directors and responsibility for granting relief  
Legal settlement: policies, litigation, number of cases

#### FINANCIAL QUESTIONNAIRE TO POOR DISTRICTS

Assessed valuation	Indebtedness
Tax statistics	Sinking fund
Tax collection	Budget for 1934

#### FINANCIAL SURVEY

(Schedules filled out by field workers)

Apportionment of relief funds among directors	Receipts Sources Deposits Custodians
Records List of records kept Accounting procedure Qualifications of accounting staff Audits and auditors	Expenditure control and budgetary procedure  Expenditures: methods and policies
Taxes Levies: how, when, by whom Commissions and costs Records	Statistics of receipts and expenditures

#### ADMINISTRATION OF POOR RELIEF

(Schedule filled out by field workers)

Sources of information	Methods and policies Handling of applications Investigation of cases Refusal of cases Cooperative planning with welfare agencies
Organization of poor districts List of officials and staff Salaries Hours	

**ADMINISTRATION OF POOR RELIEF**  
 (Schedule filled out by field workers)  
 (Continued)

Organization of poor districts (Continued)	Administration of outdoor relief
Private occupation	Amount and kinds of relief
Other offices held	Basis on which determined
Training or experience	Supervision of families
Basis of selection	Closing cases, reapplications
Board meetings:	Relief of casual poor, vagrants and transients
place, frequency,	Care of children
records	Placement
Office facilities	Indenture
Division of work	Placement of adults
Directors' opinions of	Cases eligible for other forms of relief
duties and responsibil- ities	Medical care
	Unemployment relief
	Study of case records

**ALMSHOUSE REPORT**  
 (Schedules filled out by field workers of  
 Pennsylvania Department of Welfare)

Population	Personal possessions
Capacity	Sanitation
Staff	Equipment
Per capita costs	Cleanliness
Nursing and infirmary service	Fire protection
Recreation	Admission policy
Religious services	Investigation of cases

**POOR FARM STUDY**  
 (Schedules filled out by field workers)

Size	Value of food consumed
Capital	Inmate labor
Receipts	Records kept
Expenses	Factors of organization.
Farm income	

## Bibliography

### I. Periodicals and Serial Publications

#### Pennsylvania

- Pennsylvania Association of the Directors of the Poor and Charities and Correction, Proceedings of Annual Meetings, 1875---.
- Pennsylvania Conference on Social Welfare, Pennsylvania Social Work Pittsburgh, July, 1934--- (quarterly).
- Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, Biennial Reports of the Secretary of Welfare, 1921--- (preceded by Annual Reports of Pennsylvania Board of Public Charities, 1871-1921).
- , Monthly Bulletin, May, 1932---.
- State Emergency Relief Board, Annual Reports, 1933---.
- , Unemployment Relief Digest, July 19, 1934--- (Digests and reviews of articles and books).

#### General

- American Association of Public Welfare Officials, Proceedings of Annual Meetings, 1931--- (In Social Service Review, V:3, September, 1931, and No. 3 of succeeding volumes).
- American Public Welfare Association, Public Welfare News, 1932---.
- Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, Statistics of Outdoor Relief, January, 1932--- (Monthly; published by Russell Sage Foundation as Outdoor Relief Statistics, May, 1929 to December, 1931).
- Social Service Review
- The Survey
- The Survey Graphic

### II. Books, Pamphlets and Articles

#### History, Law, Organization

#### Pennsylvania

- Association of Directors of the Poor and Charities and Corrections, The Poor Districts of Pennsylvania and the Officials Thereof, compiled by the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, Harrisburg, 1932, 68 pp.
- Beitel, Calvin G., Treatise on the Poor Laws of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, T. & J. W. Johnson & Co., 1899.
- Fertig, John G. "Address on Legal Settlements," Association of Directors of the Poor and Charities and Corrections, Proceedings of 57th Annual Meeting, 1932, pp. 96-110.
- Frankel, Emil, Poor Relief in Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, Bulletin No. 20, 1925, 14 pp. (Out of print).
- Frankel, Emil, Poor Relief in Pennsylvania - A State Wide Survey. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, Bulletin No. 21, 1925. 149 pp. (Out of print).

- General Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Revise and Codify the Laws Relating to the Relief, Care and Maintenance of the Poor in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, 1890. (Includes historical summary).
- Heffner, William Clinton, History of Poor Relief Legislation in Pennsylvania 1682-1913, Cleona, Pa., Holzapfel Publishing Company, 1913, 302 pp. (University of Pennsylvania thesis, out of print).
- Pennsylvania Medical Society, Summary of Pennsylvania's Poor Laws Affecting Care of Indigent Sick, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Medical Society, August, 1934, 100 pp. (With supplements discussing Pennsylvania work relief compensation fund and the Pennsylvania plan for emergency medical service to those on employment relief.)
- Report and Recommendations of the Commission to Codify and Revise the Laws Relating to Poor Districts and the Care of the Poor to the General Assembly of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, 1925, 78 pp.

#### General

- Abbott, Edith, "Abolish the Pauper Laws," Social Service Review, VIII: 1, March 1934, pp. 1-16.
- American Public Welfare Association, Poor Relief Laws: A Digest, Chicago, Public Administration Service, Publication No. 37, 1934, 25 pp.
- Hoffer, Frank W., Counties in Transition, University, Va., University of Virginia, Institute for Research in the Social Sciences, 1929 (Virginia).
- Kurtz, Russell H. (ed.), Looking Toward a Public Welfare Plan, New York, Charity Organization Department, Russell Sage Foundation, 1935, 34 pp.
- Report of the Royal Commission on Poor Laws and Relief of Distress, London, Reports of Commissioners, Vol. 29, 1909 (Majority report favoring administrative reforms; minority report advocating social insurance).
- Webb, Sidney and Beatrice, English Poor Law History, London, Longmans, Green, 1927-1929, 2 vol. (Part I, The Old Poor Law; Part II, The Last Hundred Years).

#### Administration of Poor Relief

##### Pennsylvania

- Clague, Ewan, Seventeenth Century Poor Relief in the Twentieth Century, Philadelphia, Joint Committee on Research of the Community Council of Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania School of Social Work, 1935, 48 pp. (Factual material based upon "Poor Relief Administration in Pennsylvania").
- Hasse, Adelaide (compiler), Non-institutional Relief Measures of The States and Territories, Pennsylvania 1700-1933, Washington, D.C., Federal Emergency Relief Administration Research Library, 1934, mimeographed, 296 pp. (Copies on file in FERA, Washington, and The Family and Child Welfare Division, Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia).
- Pennsylvania Bureau of Publications, Administrative Code of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania--Effective June 1, 1929, Harrisburg, 1929.

- Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, Poor Relief Administration in Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, Bulletin No. 61, 1934, 303 pp. (Report of state-wide study of poor relief).
- , Poor Relief in Philadelphia, 1935, mimeographed, 71 pp.
- , A Study of Poor Relief in Centre County, Pennsylvania, 1935, mimeographed, 33 pp.
- , A Study of Poor Relief in Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania, 1935, mimeographed, 65 pp.
- Pennsylvania State Dependents Commission, Pennsylvania Dependents--Report and Recommendations of the State Dependents Commission, Harrisburg, 1915, 88 pp.
- Report of Committee of House of Representatives Appointed to Investigate the Special Poor Districts of the City of Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Appendix to the Legislative Journal, 1933, pp. 7296-7364.
- Tufts, Edith Miller, Family Welfare and Relief Activities in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, 1920-1931, Pittsburgh, Bureau of Social Research, Federation of Social Agencies of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, Social Research Monograph No. 1, 1932.
- Wessel, Rosa Lee, Relationships between Private Family Agencies and Public Relief Agencies in Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Family and Child Welfare Division, Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania, 1935, mimeographed.

#### General

- Brookings Institute for Government Research, Report of Survey of Administration in Iowa Submitted to Committee on Reduction of Government Expenditures, Des Moines, Iowa, Committee on Reduction of Government Expenditures, 1933.
- Brown, Roy M., Public Poor Relief in North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press, 1928.
- Colby, Mary Ruth, The County as an Administrative Unit for Social Work, Washington, U.S. Department of Labor, Children's Bureau Publication No. 224, 1933, 48 pp.
- Kansas Public Welfare Commission, Report of Public Welfare Temporary Commission State of Kansas, Topeka, Kansas, 1933.
- New Jersey Pension Survey Commission, Plan of Commission Investigations and Progress to Date; Recommendations on the Establishment of County Welfare Boards; Recommendations on State Aid for the Relief of Old Age Dependency, Trenton, N.J., Report No. 1, Parts I, II, and III, 1932.
- Swift, Linton B., New Alignments Between Public and Private Agencies in a Community Family Welfare and Relief Program, New York, Family Welfare Association of America, 1934, 72 pp.
- White, Leonard M., Trends in Public Administration, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1933 (Report for President's Committee on Recent Social Trends; summary appears in Recent Social Trends).

#### Financial Administration

##### Pennsylvania

- Carter, Edward Weamer, Mandatory Expenditures of Local Governments in Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, 1934, 187 pp. (Thesis).



Nicholson, Blake E., Collection of Local Taxes in Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Department of Revenue, 1932. (University of Pennsylvania thesis).

Weaver, F.P. and Alderfer, N.F., County Government Costs in Pennsylvania, State College, Pa., Pennsylvania State College School of Agriculture and Experiment Station, Bulletin No. 297, 1933, 79 pp.

#### General

New Jersey Pension Survey Commission, State, County and Municipal Expenditures for Dependency Relief, Trenton, N.J., 1932, Report No. 2.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Relief Expenditures by Governmental and Private Organizations, 1929 and 1931, Washington, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1932.

#### Almshouses

##### Pennsylvania

Epstein, Abraham, The Almshouse Child, Philadelphia, Child Welfare Division, Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania, 1924, 14 pp.

Lawrence, Charles (compiler), History of the Philadelphia Almshouses and Hospitals from the Beginning of the 18th to the ending of the 19th Centuries... Philadelphia, published by the author, 1905, 388 pp.

Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, Bureau of Assistance, Directory of Pennsylvania Institutions Caring for the Sick and the Aged, Harrisburg, Bulletin No. 51, 1930, (Part VI A - County Homes and Almshouses in Pennsylvania.)

-----, Poor Relief in Lycoming County, Harrisburg, 1934, mimeographed, 41 pp. (Study made at request of county commissioners).

#### General

James, Arthur W., Back from "Over the Hill;" The Disappearance of the County Almshouses in Virginia, Richmond, Va., State Board of Public Welfare, 1936, 83 pp.

Johnson, Alexander, "The Almshouse," Encyclopaedia of The Social Sciences, Vol. 2, 1930, pp. 8-10.

#### Care of Dependent Children

##### Pennsylvania

Brinton, Hugh P., Jr., Family and Child Welfare Studies in Pennsylvania, 1921-1926, Philadelphia, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends, 1927, 43 pp.

Deardorff, Neva R., Child Welfare Conditions and Resources in Seven Pennsylvania Counties, Washington, D.C., Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, Publication No. 176, 1927, 305 pp.

Epstein, Abraham, Care of Dependent Children in Twenty-eight Counties as Administered by Poor Law Authorities, Philadelphia, Child Welfare Division, Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania, 1924, 15 pp.

Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania, Child Welfare Division, Pennsylvania's Ten Year Program for Children 1930-1940. Philadelphia, 1931, 14 pp. with chart supplement.

Report to the General Assembly Meeting in 1925 of the Commission Appointed to Study and Revise the Statutes of Pennsylvania Relating to Children, Harrisburg, 1925, 184 pp.

Report to the General Assembly Meeting in 1927 of the Commission Appointed to Study and Revise the Statutes of Pennsylvania Relating to Children, Philadelphia, 1927, 61 pp.

#### General

Breckinridge, Sophonisba P. Public Welfare Organization with Reference to Child Welfare Activities. SOCIAL SERVICE REVIEW, Vol. IV, No. 3, September, 1930, pp. 376-422.

Chenery, Wm. L. (ed.), Standards of Child Welfare, report of Children's Bureau Conferences, May and June, 1919, Washington, Conference Series No. 1, Bureau Publication No. 60, 1919, 459 pp.

Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, A Tabular Summary of State Laws Relating to Public Aid to Children in Their Own Homes in Effect January 1, 1934, Washington, D.C., Chart No. 3, 1934.

New Jersey Pension Survey Commission, State Care of Dependent Children in New Jersey, Trenton, N.J., 1932, Report No. 5.

Proceedings of the Conference on Care of Dependent Children January 25-26, 1909, issued as 60th Congress, 2nd Session, Senate Documents 721, Serial No. 5400 (Also published separately as a special message from the President).

White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, 1930. Preliminary Committee Reports, New York, The Century Company, 1930, 643 pp.

-----, Addresses and Abstracts of Committee Reports, New York, The Century Co., 1931, 365 pp. (Full committee reports issued as a series of separate volumes, 1931-1933).

#### Other Special Groups

##### Pennsylvania

Blair, J. J. (compiler), Statewide Welfare Agencies in Pennsylvania, A Directory, Philadelphia, Child Welfare Division, Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania, 1929, 45 pp.

Bogue, Mary F., Administration of Mother's Aid in Ten Localities with Special Reference to Health, Housing, Education and Recreation, Washington, Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, Publication No. 184, 1928, 206 pp. (Includes Allegheny and Berks Counties).

Community Council of Philadelphia, Lloyd Committee Report on Unemployment Relief in Philadelphia, 1930-31-32, Philadelphia, 1932, 15 pp.

-----, Neighborhood Relief in Philadelphia: A Study of Sixty Local Relief Agencies Active during the Winter of 1930-1931, Philadelphia, 1932, 39 pp.

Denby, Charles, Jr., The Case for Old Age Assistance in Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania, 1933, 24 pp.

- Dunham, Arthur, Emergency Relief in Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania, 1933, 30 pp.
- , Pennsylvania and Unemployment Relief, Social Service Review, VIII: 2, June, 1934, pp. 246-288 (Reprinted by Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania, 1934).
- Epstein, Abraham, Reports of the Pennsylvania Commission on Old-Age Pensions, Harrisburg, Old Age Pension Committee, 1919, 293 pp.; 1925, 112 pp. (Out of print).
- Hamilton, A. Gordon, and Pettit, Walter W., Report of a Study of the Philadelphia County Relief Bureau, New York, New York School of Social Work, 1933 (Unpublished).
- Howell, James W., Mathews, Major Philip, and Tyson, Francis D., Allegheny County Emergency Association Activities, Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Personnel Association, 1933, 24 pp.
- Pennsylvania Blind Commission, Report of the Commission to Study Conditions Relating to Blind Persons in Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, 1925, 84 pp.
- Pennsylvania Bureau of Audits and Accounts, State Auditor's Reports of First Talbot Fund by Counties, Harrisburg, 1933-34 (Not published).
- Pennsylvania Committee on Unemployment Relief, Report of the Committee on Unemployment Relief, Harrisburg, 1934, Appendix to the Legislative Journal, Session of 1933, pp. 7281-7285.
- Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, Instructions Relating to the Administration of the Pension Fund for the Blind, Harrisburg, 1934 mimeographed, 13 pp.
- Philadelphia Hospital and Health Survey Committee, Philadelphia Hospital and Health Survey, Philadelphia, 1929.
- Kochford, Ellen I. Report to Pennsylvania Veterans' Commission for May 31, 1933, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Veterans' Commission, 15 pp. (Unpublished).
- State Emergency Relief Board, Pennsylvania Emergency Relief Handbook, Harrisburg, 1933 (Staff manual).
- State Welfare Commission, Report on State Aid to Private Charitable Institutions and Agencies, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, Special Bulletin No. 63, 1934, 61 pp.

## Index

## A

Abuses of office, 19, 36, 42, 44-47, 58, 73, 78-79, 94, 115-17, 120, 123  
 Accounting methods, 39, 42-45, 113, 116, 120, 124  
 Accounting personnel, 51, 59  
 Adequacy of relief, 73, 85-89, 99-100, 118  
 Administrative area, 17, 18, 52, 76-77, 127, 129  
 Administrative Code of 1929, 22, 105  
 Administrative costs  
   Mothers' Assistance Fund, blind pensions and old age assistance, 32  
   Poor boards, 23, 26, 29-32, 65, 113, 115-16, 127, 131  
   State Emergency Relief Board, 32  
 Administrative unit, 1, 2, 9-21, 61-72, 77, 100-01, 113, 117-18, 127, 130-32  
 Aged, care of  
   Almshouse, 61, 68-69, 71-72  
   Boarding out, 99  
   Old age assistance, 3, 7, 32, 61, 69, 118  
   Unemployment relief, 22, 113, 117  
 Allegheny County, 9, 11, 15, 30, 33, 37-38, 52, 58, 62, 64, 82, 95, 102, 119-21  
 Allegheny County Poor District, 9, 11, 15, 37-38, 58, 62, 64, 92, 95, 102, 119-21  
 Almshouses, 61-72  
   Administrative cost, 30, 32, 65, 127  
   Admissions, 61, 69-70, 83  
   Aged, 61, 68-69  
   Boarding of adults, 98, 99  
   Children in, 68, 102, 105, 109  
   Expenditures, 29, 31, 36-37, 61, 66ff., 127  
   Hospitalization, 61, 62, 69, 72, 102  
   Number and distribution, 7, 61, 62-65, 127  
   Personnel, 71, 127  
   Population, 32, 61, 62ff., 127  
   Transients, 97, 100  
   Volume and cost, 29-31, 61, 66-68  
 American Public Welfare Association, 4  
 Annual reports of poor boards, 6, 22, 24, 29, 31, 36, 37, 62, 69, 97, 127

Application for relief, 77, 80-81, 94-95  
 Association of Directors of the Poor, 3, 35-36, 100  
 Attorneys, 35, 79  
 Auburn and Rush Poor District, 13, 65  
 Auditor General's audit of First Talbot Fund, 115  
 Auditors, 15, 73, 78, 120  
 Audits, 34-35, 44, 49-50, 52, 60, 113, 115-16, 120

## B

Baker Committee, 114  
 Bequests to the poor, 39  
 Blakely Poor District, 13, 62, 64  
 Blind, care of, 3, 7, 32, 68, 99  
 Bloom Poor District, 11, 64  
 Boarding of adults, 97-100, 128  
 Boarding of children, 106-11, 128  
 Bonding of directors and employees, 49  
 Borough poor districts, 9, 11  
 Bristol Township Poor District, 40, 41, 46, 52, 124, 125  
 Budgetary procedure, 43  
 Burial, 25, 85-86  
 Byberry Township Poor District, 62, 124-25

## C

Cameron County, 5, 16, 62  
 Carbon County, 5, 11, 64  
 Carbondale City, 11, 64  
 Case loads, 76, 95, 121  
 Case records, 73, 95-96, 99, 121, 124  
 Case work, 70, 74-75, 83, 92, 106ff.  
 Cash relief, 45, 78, 84, 115  
 Central Poor District, 13, 62, 64  
 Centralia Porough and Conyngham Twp. Poor District, 11, 64  
 Centre County, 5, 64  
 Chester County, 16  
 Children, care of, see Dependent children  
 Clinton County, 16  
 Clearing of cases, 83, 93  
 Closing of cases, 73, 94-95

Clothing relief, 45, 73, 84  
 Commissions paid  
   Poor board officers, 33  
   Tax collectors, 41-42  
 Compensation of  
   Directors, 23, 32-36  
   Employees, 34-35, 41-42, 97, 102-03  
 Conclusions of study, 129-32  
 Consolidation, 3, 15, 16, 20, 61, 69, 72, 113, 118, 123, 130-32  
 Convention expenses, 35-36  
 Costs  
   Administrative, 15, 23, 26, 29-32, 101, 113, 115-16, 127, 131  
   Almshouse, 32, 65ff., 98ff.  
   Analysis of, 29-32  
   Boarding of adults, 98ff.  
   Outdoor relief, 29-31, 36-38  
   Tax collection, 41  
   Total welfare and relief in Pennsylvania, 23-26  
 County as unit, 3, 9, 10, 11, 51, 118, 131  
 County commissioners  
   As poor directors, 10  
   Dependent children, 21, 105ff.  
   Expenditures for welfare and relief, 23-39  
 County Emergency Relief Boards, 21, 83, 117-18  
 County poor districts, 1, 3, 10, 11, 130  
 County welfare boards, 3, 11, 51, 118, 131

## D

Danville Borough and Mahoning Twp.  
   Poor District, 13, 64  
 Delaware County, 20  
 Dental care, 102  
 Dependent children, 105-11  
   Almshouses, 68, 105, 107  
   Expenditures, 24, 105, 106-07  
   Mothers' Assistance Fund, 106  
   Private agency care, 105ff.  
   Records, 105, 110-11  
   Responsibility for care, 105-11, 128  
   State Emergency Relief Board, 106

Directors of the poor, see also Poor boards, Poor districts  
   Attitudes, 51, 57-58  
   Duties, 3, 53-54, 57, 81, 85, 89  
   Election and appointment, 51-53, 57  
   Number and distribution, 51-53  
   Occupations of, 51, 54-56  
   Payment, 23, 32-34, 35-36, 124  
   Public offices held, 51, 55, 57  
   Qualifications, 51, 52, 53-56  
 Division of responsibility, 21-22, 24-29, 73, 77ff., 93-94, 105-09, 113, 121, 125, 128, 130  
 "Dumping," 20, 102  
 Duties of poor directors, 3, 53-54, 57, 81, 85, 89, 106-10

## E

Economy in government, 2, 15, 57, 65ff., 73-74, 98-100, 129-31  
 English poor law, 4, 9, 15-20, 79, 127  
 Epileptics, 3, 68, 107  
 Erie County, 11, 52  
 Estate, liability of, 91  
 Expenditures, 23-28, 127  
   Almshouse, 23, 29-31, 36-37, 61  
   Analysis of, 29-32  
   County governments, 23, 25, 26, 28  
   Dependent children, 24, 105, 106-07  
   Local, state and federal funds, 23-26  
   Outdoor relief, 23, 29-31, 36-38  
   Total, 1933, 23-25  
   Unemployment relief, 23-25, 113, 115-16

## F

Family budget allowance, 86  
 Family service, 51, 54, 57, 73, 74, 75, 83, 92-94, 128  
 Federal census of dependent children, 1933, 105-06  
 Federal funds, 23-26, 113  
 Federal Transient Bureau, 19, 61



Federation of Social Agencies of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, 120  
 Feeble-minded, 3, 25, 61, 68, 71, 107  
 Financial administration, 39-50  
     Accounting, 39, 42-45, 51, 113, 116, 120  
     Auditing, 35-38, 43-44, 49-50, 52, 60, 78, 113, 115-16, 120, 124  
     Bonding, 49  
     Budget, 43  
     Financial interest of poor directors, 47, 116, 120  
     Issuance of relief, 45-49  
     Tax levies and collection, 41-42  
     Unemployment relief, 113, 115-16  
 Fines, 39  
 First Talbot Fund, 3, 21, 37, 113, 115-17, 128  
 Food orders, 45-49, 73, 84-85  
 Forms of outdoor relief, 47-49, 73, 84-85  
 Frankel, Emil, 4n., 17, 115  
 Friendsville Borough, 15  
 Fuel relief, 73, 84  
 Fulton County, 5, 16, 62

G

General Poor Relief Act of 1925, 17, 18, 22, 34, 35, 43, 47, 49, 50, 51, 58, 62, 78, 81, 85, 89, 91, 101, 102, 107, 109, 110, 119  
 Germantown Township Poor District, 36, 40, 41, 42, 45, 46, 52, 65, 123, 124, 125  
 Gouldsboro Borough, 15  
 Governor's Planning Committee on Unemployment, 114

H

Handicapped classes, 3, 24, 25, 29, 61, 68, 69, 71-72, 99, 107, 121, 125  
 Heffner, William C., 16  
 History of poor relief, 15-20  
 Home relief, see Outdoor relief  
 Honesdale Borough and Texas Twp. Poor District, 13, 33, 65  
 Hospitals and hospitalization, 24, 61, 69, 97, 102, 119

I

Incompatible offices, 51, 55  
 Indenture of children, 110  
 Insane, see Mentally ill  
 Investigation by poor boards, 81-84, 109-10, 118, 128  
 Investigators, 51, 58, 73, 78, 81, 83, 92-93, 95, 121, 125  
 Issuance of relief, 45-49, 84-85

J

Jail, 97, 100  
 Jenkins Twp., Pittston City and Pittston Twp. Poor District, 11, 62, 64  
 Jermyn Borough, 13, 53  
 Juniata County, 5, 62  
 Justices of the peace, 9, 19, 40, 58, 60, 73, 78-79, 81, 83, 127  
 Juvenile court, 105ff., 119, 120, 128

K

King Committee, 114  
 Klein, Philip, 74

L

Lackawanna County, 5, 11, 13, 15, 33, 41, 52, 53, 62, 64  
 Lakeview Poor District, 13, 52  
 Lancaster County, 16, 52  
 Legal basis of poor relief  
     Administrative area, 17, 18, 119-20, 123  
     Dependent children, 105ff.  
     Election and appointment of directors, 9, 52-53  
     Financial administration, 34, 43, 99  
     History of, 15-20  
     Justices of the peace, authority of, 19, 40, 78-79  
     Liability for support, 53-54, 89-91  
     Payment of directors, 32-36  
     Responsibility of poor boards, 53-54, 78, 81, 85, 89, 91, 107  
     Settlement, 9, 17, 19, 97, 101-02, 107  
     Tax levy and collection, 39-40

Legal settlement, 17, 18, 19, 73, 89,  
97, 100-02, 107, 128  
Legislative Committee, Philadelphia  
Independent Poor Districts, 36, 42,  
45-46, 123  
Liability for support of paupers, 53-  
54, 89-91  
Litigation, 91, 101-02, 128  
Luzerne County, 5, 11, 13, 62, 64  
Lycoming County, 5, 11, 16, 64, 68-69

## M

Malfeasance, see Abuses of office  
Maternity care, 97, 102  
McKean County, 16  
Medical care, 70, 73, 85-86, 97, 99,  
102-03, 116, 119, 121  
Medical Society of the State of Penn-  
sylvania, 103  
Mental defectives, 3, 25, 61, 68, 71,  
107  
Mental hospitals, 7, 24, 36, 61, 62,  
119  
Mentally ill, 3, 29, 61, 68  
Method of the study, 4-6, 24, 42-43,  
62, 74, 114, 120  
Middle Coal Field Poor District, 11,  
64,  
Mixed poor districts, 9, 11, 13  
Montour County, 13, 53, 55, 64  
Moreland Township Poor District, 124  
Mothers' Assistance Fund, 3, 7, 32,  
106, 115, 118  
Municipal poor districts, 9, 11

## N

Neglected children, 108  
Nepotism, 51, 58  
Non-residents, 97, 100-02, 125  
Northumberland County, 5, 11, 13, 52,  
65  
Nursing care, 102, 128

## O

Occupations of poor directors, 51,  
54-56  
Old age assistance, 3, 7, 32, 61, 69,  
118

Organization of poor districts, 51-60  
Organization of poor relief, 1, 8-15,  
127, 128

## Outdoor relief

Adequacy, 73, 85-89, 99-100, 118  
Application, 77-81, 94  
Boarding of adults, 97-100, 128  
Case loads, 76, 95, 121  
Closing of cases, 73, 94-95  
Division of responsibility, 73,  
77ff., 84, 93-94  
"Dumping," 20, 102  
Expenditures, 23, 29-31, 36-38  
Investigation, 81-84, 93, 97, 109-  
10  
Issuance of, 45-49, 84-85  
Liability for support, 53-54, 89-91  
Medical, 73, 85-86, 97, 99, 102-  
03, 116, 119, 129  
Methods, 73-96, 99-103, 105-11, 115-  
18, 121, 124, 127  
Records, 73, 81, 95-96, 99  
Refusal, 73, 89-92, 113  
State supervision, 22  
Supervision of cases, 73, 80, 83,  
92-94  
Transients and non-residents, 97,  
100-02, 125  
Transportation, 85, 97, 100-01, 128  
Types of, 47-49, 73, 78, 84-86,  
97-98  
Volume, 36-38  
Overseers of the poor, 52  
Oxford and Lower Dublin Poor District,  
36, 40, 45, 52, 65, 124, 125

## P

Payment of  
Directors, 23, 32-36, 124  
Employees, 34-35, 41-42, 97, 102-03  
Pennsylvania Committee on Unemploy-  
ment, 114  
Pennsylvania Department of Internal  
Affairs, 5  
Pennsylvania Department of Welfare  
Powers over poor relief, 22, 105,  
114, 120  
Public assistance, other forms, 3,  
115  
1925 study of poor relief, 4, 17, 115

- 1934 study of poor relief, 1, 4-6,  
24, 34, 42, 62, 64, 68, 114, 120
- Pennsylvania Dependents Commission,  
9, 16
- Pennsylvania Veterans' Commission, 3
- Pensions for blind, 3, 7, 32, 118
- Pensions for aged, 3, 7, 32, 61, 69,  
118
- Permanent relief, 38, 73, 78, 84
- Personnel of poor boards, 51-60  
Directors, see also Directors of  
the poor. 51-58, 127, 130-31  
Employees, 34-35, 51, 58-60, 71,  
97, 102-03, 121, 127
- Philadelphia Bureau of Municipal Re-  
search, 120
- Philadelphia County, 1, 2, 5, 10, 20,  
26, 27, 65, 94, 109, 110, 119-26, 129
- Philadelphia Department of Public  
Health, 62, 125
- Philadelphia Department of Public Wel-  
fare, 1, 11, 13, 30, 33, 52, 65,  
110, 129
- Philadelphia Hospital and Health Sur-  
vey, 65
- Philadelphia independent poor dis-  
tricts, 36, 40-42, 45, 46, 52, 62,  
65, 123-25
- Pike County, 62
- Pittsburgh Department of Public Wel-  
fare, 11, 30, 33, 52, 62, 119, 121
- Pittston-Jenkins Poor District, see  
Jenkins Twp., etc.
- Placement of adults, 97-100
- Placement of children, 105-11, 128
- Politics and poor relief, 42, 51, 53,  
58, 84, 131
- Poor boards, see also Directors of the  
poor, Poor districts  
Annual reports, 6, 22, 24, 29, 31,  
36, 37, 62, 69, 97, 127  
Dependent children, 68, 105-11  
Employees, 34-35, 51-52, 58-60, 71,  
97, 102-03, 121, 127  
Expenditures, 23-38  
Family service, 51, 54, 57, 73,  
74-75, 106ff.  
Legal responsibility, 24, 29, 53-  
54, 78, 81, 85, 89, 91, 107  
Payment, 32-36  
Personnel, see Personnel
- Relation to other agencies, 20-22,  
84, 93-94, 105ff., 119, 121,  
125, 128
- Unemployment relief, 113-19, 121,  
125
- Poor districts  
Inclusion in study, 5  
Legal basis, 10, 17, 18  
Organization, 1, 8-15, 127, 129  
Population, 5, 10-15, 20, 76
- Poor farms, 39
- Poor fund  
Appropriation, 26, 28, 39, 121  
Division in district, 77  
Miscellaneous sources, 19-20, 39  
Tax levy and collection, 21, 39-  
42, 114, 119-21, 124
- Poor Law Commissions  
Of 1830-33, 9, 16  
Of 1890, 9, 16, 18, 74, 120  
Of 1915 (Pennsylvania Dependents  
Commission), 9, 16  
Of 1921-25, 9, 16, 18
- Poorhouse, 62
- Privacy of interviews, 80-81
- Private welfare agencies, 22, 73, 83,  
84, 93, 105ff., 114, 121
- Probation officers, 108-09
- Public Charities Association, 3, 4,  
131
- Public relief, forms of, 3, 7
- Purpose of study, 1, 4,
- Q
- Qualifications  
Directors, 51, 53-58  
Employees, 51-52, 58-60, 71  
Study field workers, 6, 43
- Quarantine, 102
- R
- Records  
Almshouse, 22, 68  
Boarding of adults, 99  
Child placement, 105, 110-11  
Financial, 43-47, 49-50, 113  
Outdoor relief, 73, 95-96  
Refusal of relief, 73, 89-92, 113, 114  
Relatives of indigent, 39, 89ff., 99

Relief grant, amount, 38, 73, 85-89,  
118, 125

Relief in kind, 47-49, 84

Rent relief, 85-86

Roxborough Township Poor District,  
46, 65, 123, 124

## S

Salaries, see Payment

Scope of study, 4-6

Scranton Poor District, 13, 33, 62,  
64

Settlement, 9, 17, 18, 19, 73, 89,  
97, 100-02, 107, 128

Shamokin Borough and Coal Twp. Poor  
District, 13, 65

Snyder County, 5, 16, 62

Social case records, 73, 95-96

Social case work, 70, 73, 74-75, 83,  
92-94, 106ff.

Social insurance, 131

Social service exchange, 82, 93, 124

Social work training, 51, 54, 73, 105

Social workers, 31, 35, 81, 121

Solicitors, 35, 79

State Department of Welfare, see Penn-  
sylvania Department of Welfare

State Emergency Relief Board, 4, 21,  
32, 37, 82, 86, 103, 106, 113, 115-  
18, 131

State Medical Society, 103

State supervision

Of poor relief, 22

Of unemployment relief, 113, 115

State welfare and relief expenditures,  
23-26, 113, 115, 117-18

Sullivan County, 62

Summary, 127-29

Sunbury City, 11, 52, 65

Supervision of relief cases, 73, 92-  
94, 110

Survivals in poor relief, 9, 15, 18-  
20, 127

Susquehanna County, 5, 13, 15, 65

Susquehanna Depot and Oakland Twp.  
Poor District, 13, 65

## T

Talbot Fund, First, 3, 21, 37, 113,  
115-17, 128

Talbot Fund, Second, 117

Taxes, levies, and collections, 39-  
42

Township and borough system

Defined, 1-2

History, 15-20

Organization, 8-15

Township poor districts, 11-12

Training of personnel, 51, 54, 58,  
59, 110, 121

Transients, 19, 61, 97, 100

Transportation, 85, 97, 100-01, 128

Tufts, Edith Miller, 120

## U

Unemployables, 21, 113, 117, 128

Unemployment relief, 3, 19, 21, 23-  
26, 32, 37, 41, 61, 68, 97, 98, 113-  
18, 128

Union County, 5, 16

## V

Vacancies, 49, 52

## W

Washingtonville Borough, 53

Wayne County, 5, 13, 16, 33, 65

Westmoreland County, 10

Williamsport City, 11, 64, 68

Witnesses to relief applications,  
78

Woodward Act, 117

Wyoming County, 16, 62









